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BIOGRAPHIA LITERARIA.

OF THE LIVES OF THE
MOST EMINENT
ENGLISH WRITERS.

Biographia Literaria.

BY

S. T. COLERIDGE, Esq.

Biographical Literature.

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S. T. COLERIDGE, Esq.

BIOGRAPHIA LITERARIA;

OR

Biographical Sketches

OF

MY LITERARY LIFE

AND

OPINIONS.

By S. T. COLERIDGE, Esq.

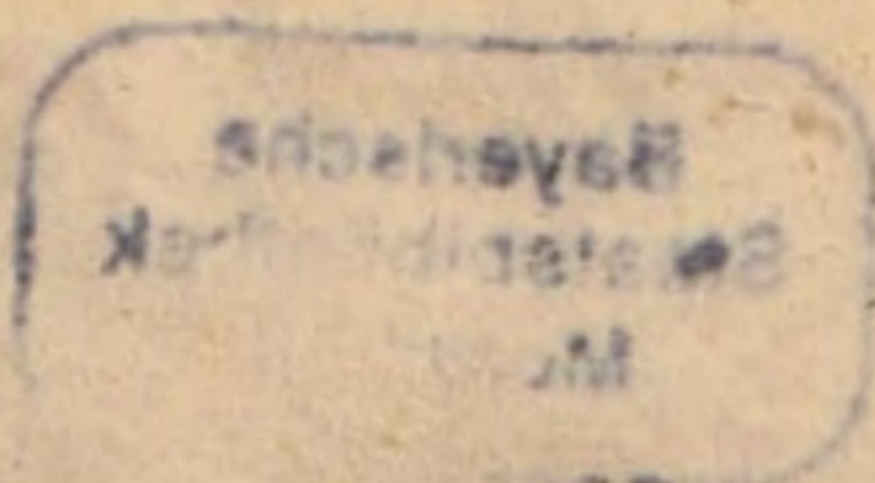
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**VOL. I.**  
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LONDON:

REST FENNER, 23, PATERNOSTER ROW

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*S. Curtis, Printer, Cornhill.*

**1817.**





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# BIOGRAPHIA LITERARIA:

OR,

## *Biographical Sketches*

OF MY

## LITERARY LIFE AND OPINIONS.



So wenig er auch bestimmt seyn mag andere zu belehren, so wünscht er doch sich denen mitzutheilen, die er sich gleichgesinnt weiss oder hofft, deren Anzahl aber in der Breite der Welt zerstreut ist: er wünscht sein Verhältniss zu den ältesten Freunden wieder anzuknüpfen, mit neuen es fortzusetzen, und in der letzten generation sich wieder andere für sein übrige Lebenszeit zu geivinnen. Er wünscht der Jugend die Umwege zu ersparen, auf denen er sich selbst verirrte.

GOETHE.

TRANSLATION. Little call as he may have to instruct others, he wishes nevertheless to open out his heart to such as he either knows or hopes to be of like mind with himself, but who are widely scattered in the world: he wishes to knit anew his connections with his oldest friends, to continue those recently formed, and to win other friends among the rising generation for the remaining course of his life. He wishes to spare the young those circuitous paths, on which he himself had lost his way.



**BIOGRAPHIA LITERARIA.**

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**CHAPTER I.**

*The motives of the present work—Reception of the Author's first publication—The discipline of his taste at school—The effect of contemporary writers on youthful minds—Bowles's sonnets—Comparison between the Poets before and since Mr. Pope.*

**I**T has been my lot to have had my name introduced both in conversation, and in print, more frequently than I find it easy to explain, whether I consider the fewness, unimportance, and limited circulation of my writings, or the retirement and distance, in which I have lived, both from the literary and political world. Most often it has been connected with some charge, which I could not acknowledge, or some principle which I had never entertained. Nevertheless, had I had no other motive, or incitement, the reader would not have been



troubled with this exculpation. What my additional purposes were, will be seen in the following pages. It will be found, that the least of what I have written concerns myself personally. I have used the narration chiefly for the purpose of giving a continuity to the work, in part for the sake of the miscellaneous reflections suggested to me by particular events, but still more as introductory to the statement of my principles in Politics, Religion, and Philosophy, and the application of the rules, deduced from philosophical principles, to poetry and criticism. But of the objects, which I proposed to myself, it was not the least important to effect, as far as possible, a settlement of the long continued controversy concerning the true nature of poetic diction: and at the same time to define with the utmost impartiality the real *poetic* character of the poet, by whose writings this controversy was first kindled, and has been since fuelled and fanned.

In 1794, when I had barely passed the verge of manhood, I published a small volume of juvenile poems. They were received with a degree of favor, which, young as I was, I well knew, was bestowed on them not so much for any positive merit, as because they were considered buds of hope, and promises of better works to come. The critics of that day, the most flattering, equally with the severest, con-



curred in objecting to them, obscurity, a general turgidness of diction, and a profusion of new coined double epithets.\* ~~✱~~ The first is the fault which a writer is the least able to detect in his own compositions: and my mind was not then sufficiently disciplined to receive the authority of others, as a substitute for my own conviction. Satisfied that the thoughts, such as they were, could not have been expressed otherwise, or at least more perspicuously, I forgot to enquire, whether the thoughts themselves

\* The authority of Milton and Shakspeare may be usefully pointed out to young authors. In the *Comus*, and earlier Poems of Milton there is a superfluity of double epithets; while in the *Paradise Lost* we find very few, in the *Paradise Regained* scarce any. The same remark holds almost equally true, of the *Love's Labour Lost*, *Romeo and Juliet*, *Venus and Adonis*, and *Lucrece* compared with the *Lear*, *Macbeth*, *Othello*, and *Hamlet* of our great Dramatist. The rule for the admission of double epithets seems to be this: either that they should be already denizens of our Language, such as blood-stained, terror-stricken, self-applauding: or when a new epithet, or one found in books only, is hazarded, that it, at least, be one word, not two words made one by mere virtue of the printer's hyphen. A language which, like the English, is almost without cases, is indeed in its very genius unfitted for compounds. If a writer, every time a compounded word suggests itself to him, would seek for some other mode of expressing the same sense, the chances are always greatly in favor of his finding a better word. "*Tanquam scopulum sic vites insolens verbum*," is the wise advice of Cæsar to the Roman Orators, and the precept applies with double force to the writers in our own language. But it must not be forgotten, that the same Cæsar wrote a grammatical treatise for the purpose of reforming the ordinary language by bringing it to a greater accordance with the principles of Logic or universal Grammar.



did not demand a degree of attention unsuitable to the nature and objects of poetry. This remark however applies chiefly, though not exclusively to the *Religious Musings*. The remainder of the charge I admitted to its full extent, and not without sincere acknowledgments to both my private and public censors for their friendly admonitions. In the after editions, I pruned the double epithets with no sparing hand, and used my best efforts to tame the swell and glitter both of thought and diction; though in truth, these parasite plants of youthful poetry had insinuated themselves into my longer poems with such intricacy of union, that I was often obliged to omit disentangling the weed, from the fear of snapping the flower. From that period to the date of the present work I have published nothing, with my name, which could by any possibility have come before the board of anonymous criticism. Even the three or four poems, printed with the works of a friend, as far as they were censured at all, were charged with the same or similar defects, though I am persuaded not with equal justice: with an EXCESS OF ORNAMENT, in addition to STRAINED AND ELABORATE DICTION. (*Vide the criticisms on the "Ancient Mariner," in the Monthly and Critical Reviews of the first volume of the Lyrical Ballads.*) May I be permitted to add, that, even at the early period of my ju-



venile poems, I saw and admitted the superiority of an austerer, and more natural style, with an insight not less clear, than I at present possess. My judgment was stronger, than were my powers of realizing its dictates; and the faults of my language, though indeed partly owing to a wrong choice of subjects, and the desire of giving a poetic colouring to abstract and metaphysical truths, in which a new world then seemed to open upon me, did yet, in part likewise, originate in unfeigned diffidence of my own comparative talent.—During several years of my youth and early manhood, I revered those, who had re-introduced the manly simplicity of the Grecian, and of our own elder poets, with such enthusiasm, as made the hope seem presumptuous of writing successfully in the same style. Perhaps a similar process has happened to others; but my earliest poems were marked by an ease and simplicity, which I have studied, perhaps with inferior success, to impress on my later compositions.

At school I enjoyed the inestimable advantage of a very sensible, though at the same time, a very severe master. He\* early moulded my taste to the preference of Demosthenes to Cicero, of Homer and Theocritus to Virgil,

\* The Rev. James Bowyer, many years Head Master of the Grammar-School, Christ Hospital.



and again of Virgil to Ovid. He habituated me to compare Lucretius, (in such extracts as I then read) Terence, and above all the chaster poems of Catullus, not only with the Roman poets of the, so called, silver and brazen ages; but with even those of the Augustan era: and on grounds of plain sense and universal logic to see and assert the superiority of the former, in the truth and nativeness, both of their thoughts and diction. At the same time that we were studying the Greek Tragic Poets, he made us read Shakspeare and Milton as lessons: and they were the lessons too, which required most time and trouble to *bring up*, so as to escape his censure. I learnt from him, that Poetry, even that of the loftiest, and, seemingly, that of the wildest odes, had a logic of its own, as severe as that of science; and more difficult, because more subtle, more complex, and dependent on more, and more fugitive causes. In the truly great poets, he would say, there is a reason assignable, not only for every word, but for the position of every word; and I well remember, that availing himself of the synonimes to the Homer of Didymus, he made us attempt to show, with regard to each, *why* it would not have answered the same purpose; and *wherein* consisted the peculiar fitness of the word in the original text.

In our own English compositions (at least for



the last three years of our school education) he showed no mercy to phrase, metaphor, or image, unsupported by a sound sense, or where the same sense might have been conveyed with equal force and dignity in plainer words. Lute, harp, and lyre, muse, muses, and inspirations, Pegasus, Parnassus, and Hipocrene, were all an abomination to him. In fancy I can almost hear him now, exclaiming “*Harp? Harp? Lyre? Pen and ink, boy, you mean! Muse, boy, Muse? your Nurse’s daughter, you mean! Pierian spring? Oh ’aye! the cloister-pump, I suppose!*” Nay certain introductions, similies, and examples, were placed by name on a list of interdiction. Among the similies, there was, I remember, that of the Manchineel fruit, as suiting equally well with too many subjects; in which however it yielded the palm at once to the example of Alexander and Clytus, which was equally good and apt, whatever might be the theme. Was it ambition? Alexander and Clytus!—Flattery? Alexander and Clytus!—Anger? Drunkenness? Pride? Friendship? Ingratitude? Late repentance? Still, still Alexander and Clytus! At length, the praises of agriculture having been exemplified in the sagacious observation, that had Alexander been holding the plough, he would not have run his friend Clytus through with a spear, this tried, and serviceable old friend was banished by public edict in se-



*cula seculorum*. I have sometimes ventured to think, that a list of this kind, or an index expurgatorius of certain well known and ever returning phrases, both introductory, and transitional, including the large assortment of modest egotisms, and flattering illeisms, &c. &c. might be hung up in our law-courts, and both houses of parliament, with great advantage to the public, as an important saving of national time, an incalculable relief to his Majesty's ministers, but above all, as insuring the thanks of country attornies, and their clients, who have private bills to carry through the house.

Be this as it may, there was one custom of our master's, which I cannot pass over in silence, because I think it imitable and worthy of imitation. He would often permit our theme exercises, under some pretext of want of time, to accumulate, till each lad had four or five to be looked over. Then placing the whole number *abreast* on his desk, he would ask the writer, why this or that sentence might not have found as appropriate a place under this or that other thesis : and if no satisfying answer could be returned, and two faults of the same kind were found in one exercise, the irrevocable verdict followed, the exercise was torn up, and another on the same subject to be produced, in addition to the tasks of the day. The reader will, I trust, excuse this tribute of recollection



to a man, whose severities, even now, not seldom furnish the dreams, by which the blind fancy would fain interpret to the mind the painful sensations of distempered sleep ; but neither lessen nor dim the deep sense of my moral and intellectual obligations. He sent us to the University excellent Latin and Greek scholars, and tolerable Hebraists. Yet our classical knowledge was the least of the good gifts, which we derived from his zealous and conscientious tutorage. He is now gone to his final reward, full of years, and full of honors, even of those honors, which were dearest to his heart, as gratefully bestowed by that school, and still binding him to the interests of that school, in which he had been himself educated, and to which during his whole life he was a dedicated thing.

From causes, which this is not the place to investigate, no models of past times, however perfect, can have the same vivid effect on the youthful mind, as the productions of contemporary genius. The Discipline, my mind had undergone, "*Ne falleretur rotundo sono et versuum cursu, cincinnis et floribus; sed ut inspiceret quidnam subesset, quæ sedes, quod firmamentum, quis fundus verbis; an figuræ essent mera ornatura et orationis fucus: vel sanguinis e materiæ ipsius corde effluentis rubor quidam natus et incalescentia genuina;*" removed all



obstacles to the appreciation of excellence in style without diminishing my delight. That I was thus prepared for the perusal of Mr. Bowles's sonnets and earlier poems, at once increased *their* influence, and *my* enthusiasm. The great works of past ages seem to a young man things of another race, in respect to which his faculties must remain passive and submissive, even as to the stars and mountains. But the writings of a contemporary, perhaps not many years elder than himself, surrounded by the same circumstances, and disciplined by the same manners, possess a *reality* for him, and inspire an actual friendship as of a man for a man. His very admiration is the wind which fans and feeds his hope. The poems themselves assume the properties of flesh and blood. To recite, to extol, to contend for them is but the payment of a debt due to one, who exists to receive it.

There are indeed modes of teaching which have produced, and are producing, youths of a very different stamp; modes of teaching, in comparison with which we have been called on to despise our great public schools, and universities

“In whose halls are hung  
Armoury of the invincible knights of old”—

modes, by which children are to be metamorphosed into prodigies. And prodigies with a



vengeance have I known thus produced! Prodigies of self-conceit, shallowness, arrogance, and infidelity! Instead of storing the memory, during the period when the memory is the predominant faculty, with facts for the after exercise of the judgement; and instead of awakening by the noblest models the fond and unmixed LOVE and ADMIRATION, which is the natural and graceful temper of early youth; *these* nurselings of improved pedagogy are taught to dispute and decide; to suspect all, but their own and their lecturer's wisdom; and to hold nothing sacred from their contempt, but their own contemptible arrogance: boy-graduates in all the technicals, and in all the dirty passions and impudence, of anonymous criticism. To such dispositions alone can the admonition of Pliny be requisite, "Neque enim debet operibus ejus obesse, quod vivit. An si inter eos, quos nunquam vidimus, floruisset, non solum libros ejus, verum etiam imagines conquiremus, ejusdem nunc honor præsentis, et gratia quasi satietate languescet? At hoc pravum, malignumque est, non admirari hominem admiratione dignissimum, quia videre, complecti, nec laudare tantum, verum etiam amare contingit." *Plin. Epist. Lib. I.*

I had just entered on my seventeenth year, when the sonnets of Mr. Bowles, twenty in number, and just then published in a quarto



pamphlet, were first made known and presented to me, by a school-fellow who had quitted us for the University, and who, during the whole time that he was in our first form (or in our school language a GRECIAN) had been my patron and protector. I refer to Dr. Middleton, the truly learned, and every way excellent Bishop of Calcutta :

“ Qui laudibus amplis  
Ingenium celebrare meum, calamumque solebat,  
Calcar agens animo validum. Non omnia terræ  
Obruta ! Vivit amor, vivit dolor ! Ora negatur  
Dulcia conspicere ; at flere et meminisse\* relictum est.”

*Petr. Ep. Lib. I. Ep. I.*

It was a double pleasure to me, and still remains a tender recollection, that I should have received from a friend so revered the first knowledge of a poet, by whose works, year after year, I was so enthusiastically delighted and inspired. My earliest acquaintances will not have forgotten the undisciplined eagerness and impetuous zeal, with which I laboured to make proselytes, not only of my companions, but of all with whom I conversed, of whatever rank, and in whatever place. As my school

\* I am most happy to have the necessity of informing the reader, that since this passage was written, the report of Dr. Middleton's death on his voyage to India has been proved erroneous. He lives and long may he live ; for I dare prophecy, that with his life only will his exertions for the temporal and spiritual welfare of his fellow men be limited.



finances did not permit me to purchase copies, I made, within less than a year and an half, more than forty transcriptions, as the best presents I could offer to those, who had in any way won my regard. And with almost equal delight did I receive the three or four following publications of the same author.

Though I have seen and known enough of mankind to be well aware, that I shall perhaps stand alone in my creed, and that it will be well, if I subject myself to no worse charge than that of singularity; I am not therefore deterred from avowing, that I regard, and ever have regarded the obligations of intellect among the most sacred of the claims of gratitude. A valuable thought, or a particular train of thoughts, gives me additional pleasure, when I can safely refer and attribute it to the conversation or correspondence of another. My obligations to Mr. Bowles were indeed important, and for radical good. At a very premature age, even before my fifteenth year, I had bewildered myself in metaphysics, and in theological controversy. Nothing else pleased me. History, and particular facts, lost all interest in my mind. Poetry (though for a school-boy of that age, I was above par in English versification, and had already produced two or three compositions which, I may venture to say, without reference to my age, were somewhat above



mediocrity, and which had gained me more credit, than the sound, good sense of my old master was at all pleased with) poetry itself, yea novels and romances, became insipid to me. In my friendless wanderings on our *leave-\** *days*, (for I was an orphan, and had scarce any connections in London) highly was I delighted, if any passenger, especially if he were drest in black, would enter into conversation with me. For I soon found the means of directing it to my favorite subjects

Of providence, fore-knowledge, will, and fate,  
Fix'd fate, free will, fore-knowledge absolute,  
And found no end in wandering mazes lost.

This preposterous pursuit was, beyond doubt, injurious, both to my natural powers, and to the progress of my education. It would perhaps have been destructive, had it been continued; but from this I was auspiciously withdrawn, partly indeed by an accidental introduction to an amiable family, chiefly however, by the genial influence of a style of poetry, so tender, and yet so manly, so natural and real, and yet so dignified, and harmonious, as the sonnets, &c. of Mr. Bowles! Well were it for me perhaps, had I never relapsed into the same

\* The Christ Hospital phrase, not for holidays altogether, but for those on which the boys are permitted to go beyond the precincts of the school.



mental disease ; if I had continued to pluck the flower and reap the harvest from the cultivated surface, instead of delving in the unwholesome quicksilver mines of metaphysic depths. But if in after time I have sought a refuge from bodily pain and mismanaged sensibility in abstruse researches, which exercised the strength and subtlety of the understanding without awakening the feelings of the heart ; still there was a long and blessed interval, during which my natural faculties were allowed to expand, and my original tendencies to develop themselves : my fancy, and the love of nature, and the sense of beauty in forms and sounds.

The second advantage, which I owe to my early perusal, and admiration of these poems (to which let me add, though known to me at a somewhat later period, the Lewsdon Hill of Mr. Crow) bears more immediately on my present subject. Among those with whom I conversed, there were, of course, very many who had formed their taste, and their notions of poetry, from the writings of Mr. Pope and his followers : or to speak more generally, in that school of French poetry, condensed and invigorated by English understanding, which had predominated from the last century. I was not blind to the merits of this school, yet as from inexperience of the world, and conse-



quent want of sympathy with the general subjects of these poems, they gave me little pleasure, I doubtless undervalued the *kind*, and with the presumption of youth withheld from its masters the legitimate name of poets. I saw, that the excellence of this kind consisted in just and acute observations on men and manners in an artificial state of society, as its matter and substance: and in the logic of wit, conveyed in smooth and strong epigrammatic couplets, as its *form*. Even when the subject was addressed to the fancy, or the intellect, as in the Rape of the Lock, or the Essay on Man; nay, when it was a consecutive narration, as in that astonishing product of matchless talent and ingenuity, Pope's Translation of the Iliad; still a *point* was looked for at the end of each second line, and the whole was as it were a sorites, or, if I may exchange a logical for a grammatical metaphor, a *conjunction disjunctive*, of epigrams. Meantime the matter and diction seemed to me characterized not so much by poetic thoughts, as by thoughts *translated* into the language of poetry. On this last point, I had occasion to render my own thoughts gradually more and more plain to myself, by frequent amicable disputes concerning Darwin's BOTANIC GARDEN, which, for some years, was greatly extolled, not only by the *reading* public in general, but even by those, whose genius



and natural robustness of understanding enabled them afterwards to act foremost in dissipating these "painted mists" that occasionally rise from the marshes at the foot of Parnassus. During my first Cambridge vacation, I assisted a friend in a contribution for a literary society in Devonshire : and in this I remember to have compared Darwin's work to the Russian palace of ice, glittering, cold and transitory. In the same essay too, I assigned sundry reasons, chiefly drawn from a comparison of passages in the Latin poets with the original Greek, from which they were borrowed, for the preference of Collins's odes to those of Gray ; and of the simile in Shakspeare

"How like a younker or a prodigal,  
The skarfed bark puts from her native bay  
Hugg'd and embraced by the strumpet wind !  
How like a prodigal doth she return,  
With over-weather'd ribs and ragged sails,  
Lean, rent, and beggar'd by the strumpet wind !"

to the imitation in the bard ;

"Fair laughs the morn, and soft the zephyr blows  
While proudly riding o'er the azure realm  
In gallant trim the gilded vessel goes,  
YOUTH at the prow and PLEASURE at the helm,  
Regardless of the sweeping whirlwinds sway,  
That hush'd in grim repose, expects it's evening prey."

(In which, by the bye, the words "realm" and "sway" are rhymes dearly purchased.) I preferred the original on the ground, that in the



imitation it depended wholly in the compositor's putting, or not putting a *small Capital*, both in this, and in many other passages of the same poet, whether the words should be personifications, or mere abstracts. I mention this, because in referring various lines in Gray to their original in Shakspeare and Milton; and in the clear perception how completely all the propriety was lost in the transfer; I was, at that early period, led to a conjecture, which, many years afterwards was recalled to me from the same thought having been started in conversation, but far more ably, and developed more fully, by Mr. WORDSWORTH; namely, that this style of poetry, which I have characterised above, as translations of prose thoughts into poetic language, had been kept up by, if it did not wholly arise from, the custom of writing Latin verses, and the great importance attached to these exercises, in our public schools. Whatever might have been the case in the fifteenth century, when the use of the Latin tongue was so general among learned men, that Erasmus is said to have forgotten his native language; yet in the present day it is not to be supposed, that a youth can *think* in Latin, or that he can have any other reliance on the force or fitness of his phrases, but the authority of the author from whence he has adopted them. Consequently he must first prepare his thoughts,



and then pick out, from Virgil, Horace, Ovid, or perhaps more compendiously from his\* Gradus, halves and quarters of lines, in which to embody them.

I never object to a certain degree of disputatiousness in a young man from the age of seventeen to that of four or five and twenty, provided I find him always arguing on one side of the question. The controversies, occasioned by my unfeigned zeal for the honor of a favorite contemporary, then known to me only by his works, were of great advantage in the formation and establishment of my taste and critical opinions. In my defence of the lines running into each other, instead of closing at each couplet; and of natural language, neither bookish, nor vulgar, neither redolent of the lamp, or of the kennel, such as *I will remember thee*; instead of the same thought tricked up in the rag-fair finery of,

——— Thy image on her wing  
Before my FANCY'S eye shall MEMORY bring,  
I had continually to adduce the metre and

\* In the Nutricia of Politian there occurs this line:  
"Pura coloratos interstrepit unda lapillos."  
Casting my eye on a University prize-poem, I met this line,  
"Lactea purpureos interstrepit unda lapillos."

Now look out in the Gradus for *Purus*, and you find as the first synonyme, *lacteus*; for *coloratus*, and the first synonyme is *purpureus*. I mention this by way of elucidating one of the most ordinary processes in the *ferrumination* of these centos.



diction of the Greek Poets from Homer to Theocritus inclusive ; and still more of our elder English poets from Chaucer to Milton. Nor was this all. But as it was my constant reply to authorities brought against me from later poets of great name, that no authority could avail in opposition to TRUTH, NATURE, LOGIC, and the LAWS of UNIVERSAL GRAMMAR ; actuated too by my former passion for metaphysical investigations ; I labored at a solid foundation, on which permanently to ground my opinions, in the component faculties of the human mind itself, and their comparative dignity and importance. According to the faculty or source, from which the pleasure given by any poem or passage was derived, I estimated the merit of such poem or passage. As the result of all my reading and meditation, I abstracted two critical aphorisms, deeming them to comprize the conditions and criteria of poetic style ; first, that not the poem which we have *read*, but that to which we *return*, with the greatest pleasure, possesses the genuine power, and claims the name of *essential poetry*. Second, that whatever lines can be translated into other words of the same language, without diminution of their significance, either in sense, or association, or in any worthy feeling, are so far vicious in their diction. Be it however observed, that I excluded from the list of wor-



thy feelings, the pleasure derived from mere novelty, in the reader, and the desire of exciting wonderment at his powers in the author. Oftentimes since then, in perusing French tragedies, I have fancied two marks of admiration at the end of each line, as hieroglyphics of the author's own admiration at his own cleverness. Our genuine admiration of a great poet is a continuous *under-current* of feeling; it is every where present, but seldom any where as a separate excitement. I was wont boldly to affirm, that it would be scarcely more difficult to push a stone out from the pyramids with the bare hand, than to alter a word, or the position of a word, in Milton or Shakspeare, (in their most important works at least) without making the author say something else, or something worse, than he does say. One great distinction, I appeared to myself to see plainly, between, even the characteristic faults of our elder poets, and the false beauty of the moderns. In the former, from **DONNE** to **COWLEY**, we find the most fantastic out-of-the-way thoughts, but in the most pure and genuine mother English; in the latter, the most obvious thoughts, in language the most fantastic and arbitrary. Our faulty elder poets sacrificed the passion, and passionate flow of poetry, to the subtleties of intellect, and to the starts of wit; the moderns to the glare and glitter of a perpetual, yet broken and hete-



rogeneous imagery, or rather to an amphibious something, made up, half of image, and half of abstract\* meaning. The one sacrificed the heart to the head ; the other both heart and head to point and drapery.

The reader must make himself acquainted with the general style of composition that was at that time deemed poetry, in order to understand and account for the effect produced on me by the SONNETS, the MONODY at MATLOCK, and the HOPE, of Mr. Bowles ; for it is peculiar to original genius to become less and less *striking*, in proportion to its success in improving the taste and judgement of its contemporaries. The poems of WEST indeed had the merit of chaste and manly diction, but they were cold, and, if I may so express it, only *dead-coloured* ; while in the best of Warton's there is a stiffness, which too often gives them the appearance of imitations from the Greek. Whatever relation therefore of cause or impulse Percy's collection of Ballads may bear to the most *popular* poems of the present day ; yet in the more sustained and elevated style, of the

\* I remember a ludicrous instance in the poem of a young tradesman :

“ No more will I endure love's pleasing pain,  
Or round my *heart's leg* tie his galling chain.”



then living poets Bowles and Cowper\* were, to the best of my knowledge, the first who combined natural thoughts with natural diction; the first who reconciled the heart with the head.

It is true, as I have before mentioned, that from diffidence in my own powers, I for a short time adopted a laborious and florid diction, which I myself deemed, if not absolutely vicious, yet of very inferior worth. Gradually, however, my practice conformed to my better judgement; and the compositions of my twenty-fourth and twenty-fifth year (*ex. gr.* the shorter blank verse poems, the lines which are now adopted in the introductory part of the *VISION* in the present collection in Mr. Southey's *Joan of Arc*, 2nd book, 1st edition, and the *Tragedy of REMORSE*) are not more below my present ideal in respect of the general tissue of the style, than those of the latest date. Their faults were

\* Cowper's task was published some time before the sonnets of Mr. Bowles; but I was not familiar with it till many years afterwards. The vein of Satire which runs through that excellent poem, together with the sombre hue of its religious opinions, would probably, *at that time*, have prevented its laying any strong hold on my affections. The love of nature seems to have led Thompson to a cheerful religion; and a gloomy religion to have led Cowper to a love of nature. The one would carry his fellow-men along with him into nature; the other flies to nature from his fellow-men. In chastity of diction however, and the harmony of blank verse, Cowper leaves Thompson unmeasureably below him; yet still I feel the latter to have been the *born poet*.



at least a remnant of the former leaven, and among the many who have done me the honor of putting my poems in the same class with those of my betters, the one or two, who have pretended to bring examples of affected simplicity from my volume, have been able to adduce but one instance, and that out of a copy of verses half ludicrous, half splenetic, which I intended, and had myself characterized, as *sermoni propria*.

Every reform, however necessary, will by weak minds be carried to an excess, that itself will need reforming. The reader will excuse me for noticing, that I myself was the first to expose *risu honesto* the three sins of poetry, one or the other of which is the most likely to beset a young writer. So long ago as the publication of the second number of the monthly magazine, under the name of NEHEMIAH HIGGENBOTTOM I contributed three sonnets, the first of which had for its object to excite a good-natured laugh at the spirit of *doleful egotism*, and at the recurrence of favorite phrases, with the double defect of being at once trite, and licentious. The second, on low, creeping language and thoughts, under the pretence of *simplicity*. And the third, the phrases of which were borrowed entirely from my own poems, on the indiscriminate use of elaborate and swelling



language and imagery. The reader will find them in the note\* below, and will I trust regard them as reprinted for biographical purposes, and not for their poetic merits. So general at

## SONNET I.

\* PENSIVE at eve, on the *hard* world I mused,  
And *my poor* heart was sad ; so at the MOON  
I gazed, and sighed, and sighed ; for ah how soon  
Eve saddens into night ! mine eyes perused  
With tearful vacancy the *dampy* grass  
That wept and glitter'd in the *paly* ray :  
And I *did pause me*, on my lonely way  
And *mused me*, on the *wretched ones* that pass  
O'er the bleak heath of sorrow. But alas !  
Most of *myself* I thought ! when it befel,  
That the *soothe* spirit of the *breezy* wood  
Breath'd in mine ear : " All this is very well,  
But much of ONE thing, is for NO thing good."  
Oh *my poor heart's* INEXPLICABLE SWELL !

## SONNET II.

OH I do love thee, meek SIMPLICITY !  
For of thy lays the lulling simpleness  
Goes to my heart, and soothes each small distress,  
Distress tho' small, yet haply great to me,  
'Tis true on Lady Fortune's gentlest pad  
I amble on ; and yet I know not why  
So sad I am ! but should a friend and I  
Frown, pout and part, then I am *very* sad.  
And then with sonnets and with sympathy  
My dreamy bosom's mystic woes I pall ;  
Now of my false friend plaining plaintively,  
Now raving at mankind in general ;  
But whether sad or fierce, 'tis simple all,  
All very simple, meek SIMPLICITY !

## SONNET III.

AND this reft house is that, the which he built,  
Lamented Jack ! and here his malt he pil'd,  
Cautious in vain ! these rats, that squeak so wild,  
Squeak not unconscious of their father's guilt.  
Did he not see her gleaming thro' the glade !  
Belike 'twas she, the maiden all forlorn.  
What tho' she milk no cow with crumpled horn,  
Yet, *aye* she haunts the dale where *erst* she stray'd :



that time, and so decided was the opinion concerning the characteristic vices of my style, that a celebrated physician (now, alas ! no more) speaking of me in other respects with his usual kindness to a gentleman, who was about to meet me at a dinner party, could not however resist giving him a hint not to mention the "*House that Jack built*" in my presence, for "that I was *as sore as a boil* about that sonnet ;" he not knowing, that I was myself the author of it.



And *aye*, beside her stalks her amorous knight !  
 Still on his thighs their wonted brogues are worn,  
 And thro' those brogues, still tatter'd and betorn,  
 His hindward charms glean an unearthly white.  
 Ah ! thus thro' broken clouds at night's high Noon  
 Peeps in fair fragments forth the full-orb'd harvest-moon !

The following anecdote will not be wholly out of place here, and may perhaps amuse the reader. An amateur performer in verse expressed to a common friend, a strong desire to be introduced to me, but hesitated in accepting my friend's immediate offer, on the score that "he was, he must acknowledge the author of a confounded severe epigram on my *ancient mariner*, which had given me great pain. I assured my friend that if the epigram was a good one, it would only increase my desire to become acquainted with the author, and begg'd to hear it recited : when, to my no less surprise than amusement, it proved to be one which I had myself some time before written and inserted in the *Morning Post*.

To the author of the *Ancient Mariner*.

Your poem must eternal be,  
 Dear sir ! it cannot fail,  
 For 'tis incomprehensible  
 And without head or tail.



## CHAPTER II.

*Supposed irritability of men of Genius—Brought to the test of Facts—Causes and Occasions of the charge—Its Injustice.*

I have often thought, that it would be neither un instructive nor unamusing to analyze, and bring forward into distinct consciousness, that complex feeling, with which readers in general take part against the author, in favor of the critic ; and the readiness with which they apply to *all* poets the old sarcasm of Horace upon the scriblers of his time: “ Genus irritabile vatum.” A debility and dimness of the imaginative power, and a consequent necessity of reliance on the immediate impressions of the senses, do, we well know, render the mind liable to superstition and fanaticism. Having a deficient portion of internal and proper warmth, minds of this class seek in the crowd *circumfana* for a warmth in common, which they do not possess singly. Cold and phlegmatic in their own nature, like damp hay, they heat and inflame by co-acervation ; or like bees they become restless and irritable through the increased temperature of collected multitudes. Hence



the German word for fanaticism (such at least was its original import) is derived from the swarming of bees, namely, Schwärmen, Schwärmerey. The passion being in an inverse proportion to the insight, *that* the more vivid, *as this* the less distinct; anger is the inevitable consequence. The absence of all foundation within their own minds for that, which they yet believe both true and indispensable for their safety and happiness, cannot but produce an uneasy state of feeling, an involuntary sense of fear from which nature has no means of rescuing herself but by anger. Experience informs us that the first defence of weak minds is to recriminate.

“ There’s no Philosopher but sees,  
That rage and fear are one disease,  
Tho’ that may burn, and this may freeze,  
They’re both alike the ague.”

MAD OX.

But where the ideas are vivid, and there exists an endless power of combining and modifying them, the feelings and affections blend more easily and intimately with these ideal creations, than with the objects of the senses; the mind is affected by thoughts, rather than by things; and only then feels the requisite interest even for the most important events, and accidents, when by means of meditation they have passed into *thoughts*. The sanity of the mind is between superstition with fanaticism on the one



hand ; and enthusiasm with indifference and a diseased slowness to action on the other. For the conceptions of the mind may be so vivid and adequate, as to preclude that impulse to the realizing of them, which is strongest and most restless in those, who possess more than mere *talent* (or the faculty of appropriating and applying the knowledge of others) yet still want something of the creative, and self-sufficing power of absolute *Genius*. For this reason therefore, they are men of *commanding* genius. While the former rest content between thought and reality, as it were in an intermedium of which their own living spirit supplies the *substance*, and their imagination the ever-varying *form* ; the latter must impress their preconceptions on the world without, in order to present them back to their own view with the satisfying degree of clearness, distinctness, and individuality. These in tranquil times are formed to exhibit a perfect poem in palace or temple or landscape-garden ; or a tale of romance in canals that join sea with sea, or in walls of rock, which shouldering back the billows imitate the power, and supply the benevolence of nature to sheltered navies ; or in aqueducts that arching the wide vale from mountain to mountain give a Palmyra to the desert. But alas ! in times of tumult they are the men destined to come forth as the shaping spirit of Ruin,



to destroy the wisdom of ages in order to substitute the fancies of a day, and to change kings and kingdoms, as the wind shifts and shapes the clouds.† The records of biography seem to confirm this theory. The men of the greatest genius, as far as we can judge from their own works or from the accounts of their contemporaries, appear to have been of calm and tranquil temper, in all that related to themselves. In the inward assurance of permanent fame, they seem to have been either indifferent or resigned, with regard to immediate reputation. Through all the works of Chaucer there reigns a cheerfulness, a manly hilarity, which makes it almost impossible to doubt a correspondent habit of feeling in the author himself. Shakspeare's evenness and sweetness of temper were almost proverbial in his own age. That this did not arise from ignorance of his own comparative greatness, we have abundant proof in his sonnets, which could scarcely have been

† "Of old things all are over old,  
Of good things none are good enough:—  
We'll show that we can help to frame  
A world of other stuff.

I too will have my kings, that take  
From me the sign of life and death:  
Kingdoms shall shift about, like clouds,  
Obedient to my breath."

WORDSWORTH'S ROB ROY.



known to Mr. Pope,\* when he asserted, that our great bard “grew immortal in his own despite.” Speaking of one whom he had celebrated, and contrasting the duration of his works with that of his personal existence, Shakspeare adds :

“ Your name from hence immortal life shall have,  
 Tho’ I once gone to all the world must die ;  
 The earth can yield me but a common grave,  
 When you entombed in men’s eyes shall lie.  
 Your monument shall be my gentle verse,  
 Which eyes not yet created shall o’er-read ;  
 And *tongues to be* your being shall rehearse,  
 When all the breathers of this world are dead :  
 You still shall live, such virtue hath my pen,  
 Where breath most breathes, e’en in the mouth of men.”

SONNET 81st.

I have taken the first that occurred ; but Shakspeare’s readiness to praise his rivals, ore pleno, and the confidence of his own equality with

\* Mr. Pope was under the common error of his age, an error, far from being sufficiently exploded even at the present day. It consists (as I explained at large, and proved in detail in my public lectures) in mistaking for the *essentials* of the Greek stage certain rules, which the wise poets imposed upon themselves, in order to render all the remaining parts of the drama consistent with those, that had been forced upon them by circumstances independent of their will ; out of which circumstances the drama itself arose. The circumstances in the time of Shakspeare, which it was equally out of his power to alter, were different, and such as, in my opinion, allowed a far wider sphere, and a deeper and more human interest. Critics are too apt to forget, that *rules* are but means to an end ; consequently where the ends are dif-



those whom he deem'd most worthy of his praise, are alike manifested in the 86th sonnet.

“ Was it the proud full sail of his great verse  
Bound for the praise of all-too-precious you,  
That did my ripe thoughts in my brain inhearse,  
Making their tomb, the womb wherein they grew ?  
Was it his spirit, by spirits taught to write  
Above a mortal pitch that struck me dead ?  
No, neither he, nor his compeers by night  
Giving him aid, my verse astonished.  
He, nor that affable familiar ghost,  
Which nightly gulls him with intelligence,  
As victors of my silence cannot boast ;  
I was not sick of any fear from thence !  
But when your countenance fill'd up his line,  
Then lack'd I matter, that enfeebled mine.

In Spencer indeed, we trace a mind constitutionally tender, delicate, and, in comparison with his three great compeers, I had almost said, *effeminate* ; and this additionally saddened by the unjust persecution of Burleigh,

ferent, the rules must be likewise so. We must have ascertained what the end *is*, before we can determine what the rules *ought* to be. Judging under this impression, I did not hesitate to declare my full conviction, that the consummate judgement of Shakspeare, not only in the general construction, but in all the *detail*, of his dramas impressed me with greater wonder, than even the might of his genius, or the depth of his philosophy. The substance of these lectures I hope soon to publish ; and it is but a debt of justice to myself and my friends to notice, that the first course of lectures, which differed from the following courses only, by occasionally varying the illustrations of the same thoughts, was addressed to very numerous, and I need not add, respectable audiences at the royal institution, before Mr. Schlegel gave his lectures on the same subjects at Vienna.



and the severe calamities, which overwhelmed his latter days. These causes have diffused over all his compositions "a melancholy grace," and have drawn forth occasional strains, the more pathetic from their gentleness. But no where do we find the least trace of irritability, and still less of quarrelsome or affected contempt of his censurers.

The same calmness, and even greater self-possession, may be affirmed of Milton, as far as his poems, and poetic character are concerned. He reserved his anger, for the enemies of religion, freedom, and his country. My mind is not capable of forming a more august conception, than arises from the contemplation of this great man in his latter days: poor, sick, old, blind, slandered, persecuted,

"Darkness before, and danger's voice behind,"  
in an age in which he was as little understood by the party, *for* whom, as by that, *against* whom he had contended; and among men before whom he strode so far as to *dwarf* himself by the distance; yet still listening to the music of his own thoughts, or if additionally cheered, yet cheered only by the prophetic faith of two or three solitary individuals, he did nevertheless

————— "Argue not  
Against Heaven's hand or will, nor bate a jot  
Of heart or hope; but still bore up and steer'd  
Right onward."



From others only do we derive our knowledge that Milton, in his latter day, had his scorers and detractors ; and even in his day of youth and hope, that he had enemies would have been unknown to us, had they not been likewise the enemies of his country.

I am well aware, that in advanced stages of literature, when there exist many and excellent models, a high degree of talent, combined with taste and judgement, and employed in works of imagination, will acquire for a man the *name* of a great genius ; though even that *analogon* of genius, which, in certain states of society, may even render his writings more popular than the absolute reality could have done, would be sought for in vain in the mind and temper of the author himself. Yet even in instances of this kind, a close examination will often detect, that the irritability, which has been attributed to the author's *genius* as its cause, did really originate in an ill conformation of body, obtuse pain, or constitutional defect of pleasurable sensation. What is charged to the *author*, belongs to the *man*, who would probably have been still more impatient, but for the humanizing influences of the very pursuit, which yet bears the blame of his irritability.

How then are we to explain the easy credence generally given to this charge, if the charge itself be not, as we have endeavoured to



show, supported by experience? This seems to me of no very difficult solution. In whatever country literature is widely diffused, there will be many who mistake an intense desire to possess the reputation of poetic genius, for the actual powers, and original tendencies which constitute it. But men, whose dearest wishes are fixed on objects wholly out of their own power, become in all cases more or less impatient and prone to anger. Besides, though it may be paradoxical to assert, that a man can know one thing, and believe the opposite, yet assuredly, a vain person may have so habitually indulged the wish, and persevered in the attempt to appear what he is not, as to become himself one of his own proselytes. Still, as this counterfeit and artificial persuasion must differ, even in the person's own feelings, from a real sense of inward power, what can be more natural, than that this difference should betray itself in suspicious and jealous irritability? Even as the flowery sod, which covers a hollow, may be often detected by its shaking and trembling.

But, alas! the multitude of books, and the general diffusion of literature, have produced other, and more lamentable effects in the world of letters, and such as are abundant to explain, tho' by no means to justify, the contempt with which the best grounded complaints of injured



genius are rejected as frivolous, or entertained as matter of merriment. In the days of Chaucer and Gower, our language might (with due allowance for the imperfections of a simile) be compared to a wilderness of vocal reeds, from which the favorites only of Pan or Apollo could construct even the rude Syrix; and from this the *constructors* alone could elicit strains of music. But now, partly by the labours of successive poets, and in part by the more artificial state of society and social intercourse, language, mechanized as it were into a barrel-organ, supplies at once both instrument and tune. Thus even the deaf may play, so as to delight the many. Sometimes (for it is with similies, as it is with jests at a wine table, one is sure to suggest another) I have attempted to illustrate the present state of our language, in its relation to literature, by a press-room of larger and smaller stereotype pieces, which, in the present anglo-gallican fashion of unconnected, epigrammatic periods, it requires but an ordinary portion of ingenuity to vary indefinitely, and yet still produce something, which, if *not* sense, will be so like it, as to do as well. Perhaps better: for it spares the reader the trouble of thinking; prevents vacancy, while it indulges indolence; and secures the memory from all danger of an intellectual plethora. Hence of all trades, literature at present de-



mands the least talent or information ; and, of all modes of literature, the manufacturing of poems. The difference indeed between these and the works of genius, is not less than between an egg, and an egg-shell ; yet at a distance they both look alike. Now it is no less remarkable than true, with how little examination works of polite literature are commonly perused, not only by the mass of readers, but by men of first rate ability, till some accident or chance\* discussion have roused their atten-

\* In the course of my lectures, I had occasion to point out the almost faultless position and choice of words, in Mr. Pope's *original* compositions, particularly in his satires and moral essays, for the purpose of comparing them with his translation of Homer, which, I do not stand alone in regarding as the main source of our pseudo-poetic diction. And this, by the bye, is an additional confirmation of a remark made, I believe, by Sir Joshua Reynolds, that next to the man who formed and elevated the taste of the public, he that corrupted it, is commonly the greatest genius. Among other passages, I analyzed sentence by sentence, and almost word by word, the popular lines,

“ As when the moon, resplendent lamp of light,” &c.  
much in the same way as has been since done, in an excellent article on Chalmers's British Poets in the Quarterly Review. The impression on the audience in general was sudden and evident : and a number of enlightened and highly educated individuals, who at different times afterwards addressed me on the subject, expressed their wonder, that truth so obvious should not have struck them *before* ; but at the same time acknowledged (so much had they been accustomed, in reading poetry, to receive pleasure from the separate images and phrases successively, without asking themselves whether the collective meaning was sense or nonsense) that they might in all probability have read the same passage again twenty



tion, and put them on their guard. And hence individuals below mediocrity not less in natural power than in acquired knowledge; nay, bunglers that had failed in the lowest mechanic crafts, and whose presumption is in due proportion to their want of sense and sensibility; men, who being first scriblers from idleness and ignorance next become libellers from envy and malevolence; have been able to drive a successful trade in the employment of the booksellers, nay have raised themselves into temporary name and reputation with the public at large, by that most powerful of all adulation,

times with undiminished admiration, and without once reflecting, that “*αρεα φαεινην αμφι σεληνην φαινετ’ αριπρεπια*” (i. e. the stars around, or near the full moon, shine pre-eminently bright) conveys a just and happy image of a moonlight sky: while it is difficult to determine whether in the lines,

“*Around her throne the vivid planets roll,  
And stars unnumber’d gild the glowing pole,*”

the sense, or the diction be the more absurd. My answer was; that tho’ I had derived peculiar advantages from my school discipline, and tho’ my *general* theory of poetry was the same then as now, I had yet experienced the same sensations myself, and felt almost as if I had been newly couched, when by Mr. Wordsworth’s conversation, I had been induced to re-examine with impartial strictness Grey’s celebrated elegy. I had long before detected the defects in “the Bard;” but “the Elegy” I had considered as proof against all fair attacks; and to this day I cannot read either, without delight, and a portion of enthusiasm. At all events, whatever pleasure I may have lost by the clearer perception of the faults in certain passages, has been more than repaid to me, by the additional delight with which I read the remainder.



the appeal to the bad and malignant passions of mankind.\* But as it is the nature of scorn, envy, and all malignant propensities to require a quick change of objects, such writers are sure, sooner or later to awake from their dream of vanity to disappointment and neglect with embittered and envenomed feelings. Even du-

\* Especially "in this AGE OF PERSONALITY, this age of literary and political GOSSIPING, when the meanest insects are worshipped with a sort of Egyptian superstition, if only the brainless head be atoned for by the sting of personal malignity in the tail! When the most vapid satires have become the objects of a keen public interest, purely from the number of contemporary characters named in the patch-work notes (which possess, however, the comparative merit of being more poetical than the text) and because, to increase the stimulus, the author has sagaciously left his own name for whispers and conjectures! In an age, when even sermons are published with a double appendix stuffed with *names*—in a generation so transformed from the characteristic reserve of Britons, that from the ephemeral sheet of a London newspaper, to the everlasting Scotch Professorial Quarto, almost every publication exhibits or flatters the epidemic distemper; that the very "last year's rebuses" in the Ladies Diary, are answered in a serious elegy "*on my father's death*" with the name and habitat of the elegiac Œdipus subscribed; and "*other ingenious solutions were likewise given*" to the said rebuses—not as heretofore by Crito, Philander, A, B, Y, &c. but by fifty or sixty plain English surnames at full length with their several places of abode! In an age, when a bashful *Philaethes*, or *Phileleutheros* is as rare on the title-pages, and among the signatures of our magazines, as a real name used to be in the days of our shy and notice-shunning grandfathers! When (more exquisite than all) I see an EPIC POEM (spirits of Maro and Mæonides make ready to welcome your new compeer!) advertised with the special recommendation, that the said EPIC POEM contains more than an hundred names of *living* persons."



ring their short-lived success, sensible in spite of themselves on what a shifting foundation it rested, they resent the mere refusal of praise, as a robbery, and at the justest censures kindle at once into violent and undisciplined abuse; till the acute disease changing into chronical, the more deadly as the less violent, they become the fit instruments of literary detraction, and moral slander. They are then no longer to be questioned without exposing the complainant to ridicule, because, forsooth, they are *anonymous* critics, and authorised as “synodical individuals”\* to speak of themselves plurali majestatico! As if literature formed a cast, like that of the PARAS in Hindostan, who, however maltreated, must not dare to deem themselves wronged! As if that, which in all other cases adds a deeper die to slander, the circumstance of its being anonymous, here acted only to make the slanderer inviolable! Thus, in *part*, from the accidental tempers of individuals (men of undoubted talent, but not men of genius) tempers rendered yet more irritable by their desire to *appear* men of genius; but still more effectively by the excesses of the mere *counterfeits* both of talent and genius; the number too being so incomparably greater of those who are *thought* to be, than of those who really are

\* A phrase of Andrew Marvel's.



men of real genius ; and in part from the natural, but not therefore the less partial and unjust distinction, made by the public itself between *literary*, and all other property ; I believe the prejudice to have arisen, which considers an unusual irascibility concerning the reception of its products as characteristic of genius. It might correct the moral feelings of a numerous class of readers, to suppose a Review set on foot, the object of which was to criticise all the chief works presented to the public by our ribbon-weavers, calico-printers, cabinet-makers, and china-manufacturers ; a Review conducted in the same spirit, and which should take the same freedom with personal character, as our literary journals. They would scarcely, I think, deny their belief, not only that the “ genus irritabile” would be found to include many other *species* besides that of bards ; but that the irritability of *trade* would soon reduce the resentments of *poets* into mere shadow-fights (*σκιωμαχίας*) in the comparison. Or is wealth the only rational object of human interest ? Or even if this were admitted, has the poet no property in his works ? Or is it a rare, or culpable case, that he who serves at the altar of the muses, should be compelled to derive his maintenance from the altar, when too he has perhaps deliberately abandoned the fairest prospects of rank and opulence in order to devote



himself, an entire and undistracted man, to the instruction or refinement of his fellow-citizens? Or should we pass by all higher objects and motives, all disinterested benevolence, and even that ambition of lasting praise which is at once the crutch and ornament, which at once supports and betrays, the infirmity of human virtue; is the character and property of the individual, who labours for our intellectual pleasures, less entitled to a share of our fellow feeling, than that of the wine-merchant or milliner? Sensibility indeed, both quick and deep, is not only a characteristic feature, but may be deemed a component part, of genius. But it is no less an essential mark of true genius, that its sensibility is excited by any other cause more powerfully, than by its own personal interests; for this plain reason, that the man of genius lives most in the ideal world, in which the present is still constituted by the future or the past; and because his feelings have been habitually associated with thoughts and images, to the number, clearness, and vivacity of which the sensation of *self* is always in an inverse proportion. And yet, should he perchance have occasion to repel some false charge, or to rectify some erroneous censure, nothing is more common, than for the many to mistake the general liveliness of his manner and language *whatever* is the subject, for the effects of pecu-



liar irritation from its accidental relation to himself.\*

For myself, if from my own feelings, or from the less suspicious test of the observations of others, I had been made aware of any literary testiness or jealousy; I trust, that I should have been, however, neither silly or arrogant enough, to have burthened the imperfection on GENIUS. But an experience (and I should not need documents in abundance to prove my words, if I added) a tried experience of twenty years, has taught me, that the original sin of my character consists in a careless indifference to public opinion, and to the attacks of those who influence it; that praise and admiration

\* This is one instance among many of deception, by the telling the half of a fact, and omitting the other half, when it is from their mutual counteraction and neutralization, that the *whole* truth arises, as a tertium aliquid different from either. Thus in Dryden's famous line "Great wit" (which here means genius) "to madness sure is near allied." Now as far as the profound sensibility, which is doubtless *one* of the components of genius, were alone considered, single and unbalanced, it might be fairly described as exposing the individual to a greater chance of mental derangement; but then a more than usual rapidity of association, a more than usual power of passing from thought to thought, and image to image, is a component equally essential; and in the due modification of each by the other the GENIUS itself consists; so that it would be as just as fair to describe the earth, as in imminent danger of exorbitating, or of falling into the sun, according as the assertor of the absurdity *confined* his attention either to the projectile or to the attractive force exclusively.



have become yearly, less and less desirable, except as marks of sympathy; nay that it is difficult and distressing to me, to think with any interest even about the sale and profit of my works, important, as in my present circumstances, such considerations must needs be. Yet it never occurred to me to believe or fancy, that the quantum of intellectual power bestowed on me by nature or education was in any way connected with this habit of my feelings; or that it needed any other parents or fosterers, than constitutional indolence, aggravated into languor by ill-health; the accumulating embarrassments of procrastination; the mental cowardice, which is the inseparable companion of procrastination, and which makes us anxious to think and converse on any thing rather than on what concerns ourselves; in fine, all those close vexations, whether chargeable on my faults or my fortunes which leave me but little grief to spare for evils comparatively distant and alien.

Indignation at literary wrongs, I leave to men born under happier stars. I cannot *afford it*. But so far from condemning those who can, I deem it a writer's duty, and think it creditable to his heart, to feel and express a resentment proportioned to the grossness of the provocation, and the importance of the object. There is no profession on earth, which requires



an attention so early, so long, or so unintermitting as that of poetry; and indeed as that of literary composition in general, if it be such, as at all satisfies the demands both of taste and of sound logic. How difficult and delicate a task even the mere mechanism of verse is, may be conjectured from the failure of those, who have attempted poetry late in life. Where then a man has, from his earliest youth, devoted his whole being to an object, which by the admission of all civilized nations in all ages is honorable as a pursuit, and glorious as an attainment; what of all that relates to himself and his family, if only we except his moral character, can have fairer claims to his protection, or more authorise acts of self-defence, than the elaborate products of his intellect, and intellectual industry? Prudence itself would command us to *show*, even if defect or diversion of natural sensibility had prevented us from *feeling*, a due interest and qualified anxiety for the offspring and representatives of our nobler being. I know it, alas! by woeful experience! I have laid too many eggs in the hot sands of this wilderness the world, with ostrich carelessness and ostrich oblivion. The greater part indeed have been trod under foot, and are forgotten; but yet no small number have crept forth into life, some to furnish feathers for the caps of others, and still more to plume the



shafts in the quivers of my enemies, of them that unprovoked have lain in wait against my soul.

“Sic vos, non vobis mellificatis, apes!”

An instance in confirmation of the Note, p. 39, occurs to me as I am correcting this sheet, with the FAITHFUL SHEPHERDESS open before me. Mr. Seward first traces Fletcher's lines ;

“More foul diseases than e'er yet the hot  
Sun bred thro' his burnings, while the dog  
Pursues the raging lion, throwing the fog  
And deadly vapor from his angry breath,  
Filling the lower world with plague and death.”—

To Spenser's Shepherd's Calendar,

“The rampant lion hunts he fast  
With dogs of noisome breath ;  
Whose baleful barking brings, in haste,  
Pyne, plagues, and dreary death !”

He then takes occasion to introduce Homer's simile of the sight of Achilles' shield to Priam compared with the Dog Star, literally thus—

“For this indeed is most splendid, but it was made an evil sign, and brings many a consuming disease to wretched mortals.” Nothing can be more simple as a description, or more accurate as a simile ; which (says Mr. S.) is thus *finely* translated by Mr. Pope :

“Terrific Glory ! for his burning breath  
Taints the *red* air with fevers, plagues, and death !”

Now here (not to mention the tremendous bombast) the *Dog Star*, so called, is turned into a *real* Dog, a very odd Dog, a Fire, Fever, Plague, and death-breathing, *red-air-tainting* Dog : and the whole *visual* likeness is lost, while the likeness in the *effects* is rendered absurd by the exaggeration. In Spenser and Fletcher the thought is justifiable ; for the images are at least consistent, and it was the intention of the writers to mark the seasons by this allegory of visualized Puns.



### CHAPTER III.

*The author's obligations to critics, and the probable occasion—Principles of modern criticism—Mr. Southey's works and character.*

To anonymous critics in reviews, magazines, and news-journals of various name and rank, and to satirists with or without a name, in verse or prose, or in verse-text aided by prose-comment, I do seriously believe and profess, that I owe full two thirds of whatever reputation and publicity I happen to possess. For when the name of an individual has occurred so frequently, in so many works, for so great a length of time, the readers of these works (which with a shelf or two of BEAUTIES, ELEGANT EXTRACTS and ANAS, form nine-tenths of the reading of the reading public\*) cannot but

\* For as to the devotees of the circulating libraries, I dare not compliment their *pass-time*, or rather *kill-time*, with the name of *reading*. Call it rather a sort of beggarly day-dreaming, during which the mind of the dreamer furnishes for itself nothing but laziness and a little mawkish sensibility; while the whole *materiel* and imagery of the doze is supplied *ab extra* by a sort of mental *camera obscura* manufactured at the printing office, which *pro tempore* fixes, reflects and transmits the moving phantasms of one man's



be familiar with the name, without distinctly remembering whether it was introduced for an eulogy or for censure. And this becomes the more likely, if (as I believe) the habit of perusing periodical works may be properly added to Averrhoe's\* catalogue of ANTI-MNE-MONICS, or weakeners of the memory. But where this has not been the case, yet the reader

delirium, so as to people the barrenness of an hundred other brains afflicted with the same trance or suspension of all common sense and all definite purpose. We should therefore transfer this species of *amusement*, (if indeed those can be said to retire *a musis*, who were never in their company, or relaxation be attributable to those, whose bows are never bent) from the genus, *reading*, to that comprehensive class characterized by the power of reconciling the two contrary yet co-existing propensities of human nature, namely; indulgence of sloth, and hatred of vacancy. In addition to novels and tales of chivalry in prose or rhyme, (by which last I mean neither rhythm nor metre) this genus comprizes as its species, gaming, swinging, or swaying on a chair or gate; spitting over a bridge; smoking; snuff-taking; tete a tete quarrels after dinner between husband and wife; conning word by word all the advertisements of the daily advertizer in a public house on a rainy day, &c. &c. &c.

\* Ex. gr. *Pediculos e capillis excerptos in arenam jacere incontusos*; eating of unripe fruit; gazing on the clouds, and (in genere) on moveable things suspended in the air; riding among a multitude of camels; frequent laughter; listening to a series of jests and humorous anecdotes, as when (so to modernise the learned Saracen's meaning) one man's droll story of an Irishman inevitably occasions another's droll story of a Scotchman, which again by the same sort of conjunction disjunctive leads to some etourderie of a Welchman, and that again to some sly hit of a Yorkshireman; the habit of reading tomb-stones in church-yards, &c. By the bye, this catalogue strange as it may appear, is not insusceptible of a sound psychological commentary.



will be apt to suspect, that there must be something more than usually strong and extensive in a reputation, that could either require or stand so merciless and long-continued a cannonading. Without any feeling of *anger* therefore (for which indeed, on my own account, I have no pretext) I may yet be allowed to express some degree of *surprize*, that after having run the critical gauntlet for a certain class of faults which I *had*, nothing having come before the judgement-seat in the interim, I should, year after year, quarter after quarter, month after month (not to mention sundry petty periodicals of still quicker revolution, "or weekly or diurnal") have been for at least 17 years consecutively dragged forth by them into the foremost ranks of the *proscribed*, and forced to abide the brunt of abuse, for faults directly opposite, and which I certainly had not. How shall I explain this?

Whatever may have been the case with others, I certainly cannot attribute this persecution to personal dislike, or to envy, or to feelings of vindictive animosity. Not to the former, for, with the exception of a very few who are my intimate friends, and were so before they were known as authors, I have had little other acquaintance with literary characters, than what may be implied in an accidental introduction, or casual meeting in a mixt company. And,



as far as words and looks can be trusted, I must believe that, even in these instances, I had excited no unfriendly disposition.\* Neither by

\* Some years ago, a gentleman, the chief writer and conductor of a celebrated review, distinguished by its hostility to Mr. Southey, spent a day or two at Keswick. That he was, without diminution on this account, treated with every hospitable attention by Mr. Southey and myself, I trust I need not say. But one thing I may venture to notice; that at no period of my life do I remember to have received so many, and such high coloured compliments in so short a space of time. He was likewise circumstantially informed by what series of accidents it had happened, that Mr. Wordsworth, Mr. Southey, and I had become neighbours; and how utterly unfounded was the supposition, that we considered ourselves, as belonging to any common school, but that of good sense confirmed by the long-established models of the best times of Greece, Rome, Italy, and England; and still more groundless the notion, that Mr. Southey (for as to myself I have published so little, and that little, of so little importance, as to make it almost ludicrous to mention my name at all) could have been concerned in the formation of a poetic sect with Mr. Wordsworth, when so many of his works had been published not only previously to any acquaintance between them; but before Mr. Wordsworth himself had written any thing but in a diction ornate, and uniformly sustained; when too the slightest examination will make it evident, that between those and the after writings of Mr. Southey, there exists no other difference than that of a progressive degree of excellence from progressive developement of power, and progressive facility from habit and increase of experience. Yet among the first articles which this man wrote after his return from Keswick, we were characterized as "the School of whining and hypochondriacal poets that haunt the Lakes." In reply to a letter from the same gentleman, in which he had asked me, whether I was in earnest in preferring the style of Hooker to that of Dr. Johnson; and Jeremy Taylor to Burke; I stated, somewhat at large, the comparative excellences and defects which characterized our best prose writers, from the reformation, to the first half of Charles 2nd; and that of those who had flourished during the present reign, and the preceding one. About twelve months after-



letter, or in conversation, have I ever had dispute or controversy beyond the common social interchange of opinions. Nay, where I had reason to suppose my convictions fundamentally different, it has been my habit, and I may add, the impulse of my nature, to assign the grounds of my belief, rather than the belief itself; and not to express dissent, till I could

wards, a review appeared on the same subject, in the concluding paragraph of which the reviewer asserts, that his chief motive for entering into the discussion was to separate a rational and qualified admiration of our elder writers, from the indiscriminate enthusiasm of a recent school, who praised what they did not understand, and caricatured what they were unable to imitate. And, that no doubt might be left concerning the persons alluded to, the writer annexes the names of Miss BAILIE, W. SOUTHEY, WORDSWORTH and COLERIDGE. For that which follows, I have only ear-say evidence; but yet such as demands my belief; viz. that on being questioned concerning this apparently wanton attack, more especially with reference to Miss Bailie, the writer had stated as his motives, that this lady when at Edinburgh had declined a proposal of introducing him to her; that Mr. Southey had written against him; and Mr. Wordsworth had talked contemptuously of him; but that as to *Coleridge* he had noticed him merely because the names of Southey and Wordsworth and Coleridge always went together. But if it were worth while to mix together, as ingredients, half the anecdotes which I either myself know to be true, or which I have received from men incapable of intentional falsehood, concerning the characters, qualifications, and motives of our anonymous critics, whose decisions are oracles for our reading public; I might safely borrow the words of the apocryphal Daniel; "*Give me leave, O SOVEREIGN PUBLIC, and I shall slay this dragon without sword or staff.*" For the compound would be as the "*Pitch, and fat, and hair, which Daniel took, and did seethe them together, and made lumps thereof, and put into the dragon's mouth, and so the dragon burst in sunder; and Daniel said LO; THESE ARE THE GODS YE WORSHIP.*"



establish some points of complete sympathy, some grounds common to both sides, from which to commence its explanation.

Still less can I place these attacks to the charge of envy. The few pages, which I have published, are of too distant a date ; and the extent of their sale a proof too conclusive against their having been popular at any time ; to render probable, I had almost said possible, the excitement of envy on *their* account ; and the man who should envy me on any *other*, verily he must be *envy-mad* !

Lastly, with as little semblance of reason, could I suspect any animosity towards me from vindictive feelings as the cause. I have before said, that my acquaintance with literary men has been limited and distant ; and that I have had neither dispute nor controversy. From my first entrance into life, I have, with few and short intervals, lived either abroad or in retirement. My different essays on subjects of national interest, published at different times, first in the *Morning Post* and then in the *Courier*, with my courses of lectures on the principles of criticism as applied to Shakspeare and Milton, constitute my whole publicity ; the only occasions on which I *could* offend any member of the republic of letters. With one solitary exception in which my words were first misstated and then wantonly applied to an indivi-



dual, I could never learn, that I had excited the displeasure of any among my literary contemporaries. Having announced my intention to give a course of lectures on the characteristic merits and defects of English poetry in its different æras ; first, from Chaucer to Milton ; second, from Dryden inclusive to Thompson ; and third, from Cowper to the present day ; I changed my plan, and confined my disquisition to the two former æras, that I might furnish no possible pretext for the unthinking to misconstrue, or the malignant to misapply my words, and having stamp'd their own meaning on them, to pass them as current coin in the marts of garrulity or detraction.

Praises of the unworthy are felt by ardent minds as robberies of the deserving ; and it is too true, and too frequent, that Bacon, Harrington, Machiavel, and Spinosà, are *not* read, because Hume, Condilliac, and Voltaire *are*. But in promiscuous company no prudent man will oppugn the merits of a contemporary in his own supposed department ; contenting himself with praising in his turn those whom *he* deems excellent. If I should ever deem it my duty at all to oppose the pretensions of individuals, I would oppose them in books which could be weighed and answered, in which I could evolve the whole of my reasons and feelings, with their requisite limits and modifica-



tions ; not in irrecoverable conversation, where however strong the reasons might be, the feelings that prompted them would assuredly be attributed by some one or other to envy and discontent. Besides I well know, and I trust, have acted on that knowledge, that it must be the ignorant and injudicious who extol the unworthy ; and the eulogies of critics without taste or judgement are the natural reward of authors without feeling or genius. “Sint unicuique sua premia.”

How then, dismissing, as I do, these three causes, am I to account for attacks, the long continuance and inveteracy of which it would require all three to explain. The solution may seem to have been given, or at least suggested, in a note to a preceding page. *I was in habits of intimacy with Mr. Wordsworth and Mr. Southey !* This, however, transfers, rather than removes, the difficulty. Be it, that by an unconscionable extension of the old adage, “nos- citur a socio” my literary friends are never under the water-fall of criticism, but I must be wet through with the spray ; yet how came the torrent to descend upon *them* ?

First then, with regard to Mr. Southey. I well remember the general reception of his earlier publications : viz. the poems published with Mr. Lovell under the names of Moschus and Bion ; the two volumes of poems under his



own name, and the Joan of Arc. The censures of the critics by profession are extant, and may be easily referred to :—careless lines, inequality in the merit of the different poems, and (in the lighter works) a predilection for the strange and whimsical ; in short, such faults as might have been anticipated in a young and rapid writer, were indeed sufficiently enforced. Nor was there at that time wanting a party spirit to aggravate the defects of a poet, who with all the courage of uncorrupted youth had avowed his zeal for a cause, which he deemed that of liberty, and his abhorrence of oppression by whatever name consecrated. But it was as little objected by others, as dreamt of by the poet himself, that he *preferred* careless and prosaic lines on rule and of forethought, or indeed that he pretended to any other art or theory of poetic diction, besides that which we may all learn from Horace, Quintilian, the admirable dialogue de Causis Corruptæ Eloquentiæ, or Strada's Prolusions ; if indeed natural good sense and the early study of the best models in his own language had not infused the same maxims more securely, and, if I may venture the expression, more vitally. All that could have been fairly deduced was, that in his taste and estimation of writers Mr. Southey agreed far more with Warton, than with Johnson. Nor do I mean to deny, that at all times



Mr. Southey was of the same mind with Sir Philip Sidney in preferring an excellent ballad in the *humblest* style of poetry to twenty indifferent poems that strutted in the *highest*. And by what have his works, published since then, been characterized, each more strikingly than the preceding, but by greater splendor, a deeper pathos, profounder reflections, and a more sustained dignity of language and of metre? Distant may the period be, but whenever the time shall come, when all his works shall be collected by some editor worthy to be his biographer, I trust that an excerpta of all the passages, in which his writings, name, and character have been attacked, from the pamphlets and periodical works of the last twenty years, may be an accompaniment. Yet that it would prove medicinal in after times, I dare not hope; for as long as there are readers to be delighted with calumny, there will be found reviewers to calumniate. And such readers will become in all probability more numerous, in proportion as a still greater diffusion of literature shall produce an increase of sciolists; and sciolism bring with it petulance and presumption. In times of old, books were as religious oracles; as literature advanced, they next became venerable preceptors; they then descended to the rank of instructive friends; and as their numbers increased, they sunk still



lower to that of entertaining companions ; and at present they seem degraded into culprits to hold up their hands at the bar of every self-elected, yet not the less peremptory, judge, who chuses to write from humour or interest, from enmity or arrogance, and to abide the decision (in the words of Jeremy Taylor) “ of him that reads in malice, or him that reads after dinner.”

The same gradual retrograde movement may be traced, in the relation which the authors themselves have assumed towards their readers. From the lofty address of Bacon : “ these are the meditations of Francis of Verulam, which that posterity should be possessed of, he deemed *their* interest :” or from dedication to Monarch or Pontiff, in which the honor given was asserted in equipoise to the patronage acknowledged from PINDAR’S

————— ’επ’ ἄλλοι-  
 -σι δ’ ἄλλοι μεγάλοι. τό δ’ ἔσχατον κορυ-  
 -φᾶται βασιλῆυσι. μὴκέτι  
 Πάπταινε πόρσιον.  
 Εἴη σὲ τε τῷτον  
 Υψὲ χρόνον πατεῖν, ἐμέ  
 Τε τοσσαδε νικαρόροις  
 Ομιλεῖν, προφαντον σορίαν κατ’ Ελ-  
 -λανας εοντα παντᾶ.

OLYMP. OD. I.



Poets and Philosophers, rendered diffident by their very number, addressed themselves to "*learned* readers;" then, aimed to conciliate the graces of "the *candid* reader;" till, the critic still rising as the author sunk, the amateurs of literature collectively were erected into a municipality of judges, and addressed as THE TOWN! And now finally, all men being supposed able to read, and all readers able to judge, the multitudinous PUBLIC, shaped into personal unity by the magic of abstraction, sits nominal despot on the throne of criticism. But, alas! as in other despotisms, it but echoes the decisions of its invisible ministers, whose intellectual claims to the guardianship of the muses seem, for the greater part, analogous to the physical qualifications which adapt their oriental brethren for the superintendence of the Harem. Thus it is said, that St. Nepomuc was installed the guardian of bridges because he had fallen over one, and sunk out of sight; thus too St. Cecilia is said to have been first propitiated by musicians, because having failed in her own attempts, she had taken a dislike to the art, and all its successful professors. But I shall probably have occasion hereafter to deliver my convictions more at large concerning this state of things, and its influences on taste, genius and morality.



In the "Thalaba" the "Madoc" and still more evidently in the unique\* "Cid," the "Kehama," and as last, so best, the "Don Roderick;" Southey has given abundant proof, "*se cogitâsse quàm sit magnum dare aliquid in manus hominum: nec persuadere sibi posse, non sæpe tractandum quod placere et semper et omnibus cupiat.*" Plin. Ep. Lib. 7. Ep. 17. But on the other hand I guess, that Mr. Southey was quite unable to comprehend, wherein could consist the crime or mischief of printing half a dozen or more playful poems; or to speak more generally, compositions which would be enjoyed or passed over, according as the taste and humour of the reader might chance to be; provided they contained nothing immoral. In the present age "*perituræ parcere chartæ*" is emphatically an unreasonable demand. The merest trifle, he ever sent abroad, had tenfold better claims to its ink and paper, than all the silly criticisms, which prove no more, than that

\* I have ventured to call it "unique;" not only because I know no work of the kind in our language (if we except a few chapters of the old translation of Froissart) none, which uniting the charms of romance and history, keeps the imagination so constantly on the wing, and yet leaves so much for after reflection; but likewise, and chiefly, because it is a compilation, which in the various excellencies of translation, selection, and arrangement, required and proves greater genius in the compiler, as living in the present state of society, than in the original composers.



the critic was not one of those, for whom the trifle was written ; and than all the grave exhortations to a greater reverence for the public. As if the passive page of a book, by having an epigram or doggrel tale impressed on it, instantly assumed at once loco-motive power and a sort of ubiquity, so as to flutter and buz in the ear of the public to the sore annoyance of the said mysterious personage. But what gives an additional and more ludicrous absurdity to these lamentations is the curious fact, that if in a volume of poetry the critic should find poem or passage which he deems more especially worthless, he is sure to select and reprint it in the review ; by which, on his own grounds, he wastes as much more paper than the author, as the copies of a fashionable review are more numerous than those of the original book ; in some, and those the most prominent instances, as ten thousand to five hundred. I know nothing that surpasses the vileness of deciding on the merits of a poet or painter (not by characteristic defects ; for where there is genius, *these* always point to his characteristic *beauties* ; but) by accidental failures or faulty passages ; except the impudence of defending it, as the proper duty, and most instructive part, of criticism. Omit or pass slightly over, the expression, grace, and grouping of Raphael's *figures* ; but ridicule in *detail* the knitting-



needles and broom-twigs, that are to represent trees in his back grounds ; and never let him hear the last of his *galli-pots* ! Admit, that the Allegro and Penseroso of Milton are not *without merit* ; but repay yourself for this concession, by reprinting at length the *two poems on the University Carrier* ! As a fair specimen of his sonnets, quote “ *a Book was writ of late called Tetrachordon* ;” and as characteristic of his rhythm and metre cite his literal translation of the first and second psalm ! In order to justify yourself, you need only assert, that had you dwelt chiefly on the beauties and excellencies of the poet, the admiration of these might seduce the attention of future writers from the objects of their love and wonder, to an imitation of the few poems and passages in which the poet was most unlike himself.

But till reviews are conducted on far other principles, and with far other motives ; till in the place of arbitrary dictation and petulant sneers, the reviewers support their decisions by reference to fixed canons of criticism, previously established and deduced from the nature of man ; reflecting minds will pronounce it arrogance in them thus to announce themselves to men of letters, as the guides of their taste and judgment. To the purchaser and mere reader it is, at all events, an injustice. He who tells me that there are *defects* in a new



work, tells me nothing which I should not have taken for granted without his information. But he, who points out and elucidates the *beauties* of an original work, does indeed give me interesting information, such as experience would not have authorised me in anticipating. And as to compositions which the authors themselves announce with “*Hæc ipsi novimus esse nihil*,” why should we judge by a different rule two printed works, only because the one author was alive, and the other in his grave? What literary man has not regretted the prudery of Spratt in refusing to let his friend Cowley appear in his slippers and dressing gown? I am not perhaps the only one who has derived an innocent amusement from the riddles, conundrums, tri-syllable lines, &c. &c. of Swift and his correspondents, in hours of languor when to have read his more finished works would have been useless to myself, and, in some sort, an act of injustice to the author. But I am at a loss to conceive by what perversity of judgement, these relaxations of his genius could be employed to diminish his fame as the writer of “*Gulliver’s travels*,” and the “*Tale of a Tub*.” Had Mr. Southey written twice as many poems of inferior merit, or partial interest, as have enlivened the journals of the day, they would have added to his honour with good and wise men, not merely or principally



as proving the versatility of his talents, but as evidences of the purity of that mind, which even in its levities never wrote a line, which it need regret on any moral account.

I have in imagination transferred to the future biographer the duty of contrasting Southey's fixed and well-earned fame, with the abuse and indefatigable hostility of his anonymous critics from his early youth to his ripest manhood. But I cannot think so ill of human nature as not to believe, that these critics have already taken shame to themselves, whether they consider the object of their abuse in his moral or his literary character. For reflect but on the variety and extent of his acquirements ! He stands second to no man, either as an historian or as a bibliographer ; and when I regard him, as a popular essayist, (for the articles of his compositions in the reviews are for the greater part essays on subjects of deep or curious interest rather than criticisms on particular works\*) I look in vain for any writer, who has conveyed so much information, from so many and such recondite sources, with so many just and original reflections, in a style so lively and poignant, yet so uniformly classical and perspicuous ; no one in short who has combined so much wisdom with

\* See the articles on Methodism, in the Quarterly Review ; the small volume on the New System of Education, &c.



so much wit ; so much truth and knowledge with so much life and fancy. His prose is always intelligible and always entertaining. In poetry he has attempted almost every species of composition known before, and he has added new ones ; and if we except the highest lyric, (in which how few, how very few even of the greatest minds have been fortunate) he has attempted every species successfully : from the political song of the day, thrown off in the playful overflow of honest joy and patriotic exultation, to the wild ballad ;\* from epistolary ease and graceful narrative, to the austere and impetuous moral declamation ; from the pastoral claims and wild streaming lights of the "Thalaba," in which sentiment and imagery have given permanence even to the excitement of curiosity ; and from the full blaze of the "Kehama," (a gallery of finished pictures in one splendid fancy piece, in which, notwithstanding, the moral grandeur rises gradually above the brilliance of the colouring and the boldness and novelty of the machinery) to the more sober beauties of the "Madoc ;" and lastly, from the Madoc to his "Roderic," in which, retaining all his former excellencies of a poet eminently inventive and picturesque, he has

\* See the incomparable "Return to Moscow," and the "Old Woman of Berkeley."



surpassed himself in language and metre, in the construction of the whole, and in the splendor of particular passages.

Here then shall I conclude? No! The characters of the deceased, like the encomia on tombstones, as they are described with religious tenderness, so are they read, with allowing sympathy indeed, but yet with rational deduction. There are men, who deserve a higher record; men with whose characters it is the interest of their contemporaries, no less than that of posterity, to be made acquainted; while it is yet possible for impartial censure, and even for quick-sighted envy, to cross-examine the tale without offence to the courtesies of humanity; and while the eulogist detected in exaggeration or falsehood must pay the full penalty of his baseness in the contempt which brands the convicted flatterer. Publicly has Mr. Southey been reviled by men, who (I would feign hope for the honor of human nature) hurled fire-brands against a figure of their own imagination, publicly have his talents been depreciated, his principles denounced; as publicly do I therefore, who have known him intimately, deem it my duty to leave recorded, that it is SOUTHEY'S almost unexampled felicity, to possess the best gifts of talent and genius free from all their characteristic defects. To those who remember the state of our public schools and universities some twenty years past,



it will appear no ordinary praise in any man to have passed from innocence into virtue, not only free from all vicious habit, but unstained by one act of intemperance, or the degradations akin to intemperance. That scheme of head, heart, and habitual demeanour, which in his early manhood, and first controversial writings, Milton, claiming the privilege of self-defence, asserts of himself, and challenges his calumniators to disprove; this will his school-mates, his fellow-collegians, and his maturer friends, with a confidence proportioned to the intimacy of their knowledge, bear witness to, as again realized in the life of Robert Southey. But still more striking to those, who by biography or by their own experience are familiar with the general habits of genius, will appear the poet's matchless industry and perseverance in his pursuits; the worthiness and dignity of those pursuits; his generous submission to tasks of transitory interest, or such as *his* genius alone could make otherwise; and that having thus more than satisfied the claims of affection or prudence, he should yet have made for himself time and power, to achieve more, and in more various departments than almost any other writer has done, though employed wholly on subjects of his own choice and ambition. But as Southey possesses, and is not possessed by, his genius, even so is he the master even of his virtues. The regular



and methodical tenor of his daily labours, which would be deemed rare in the most mechanical pursuits, and might be envied by the mere man of business, loses all semblance of formality in the dignified simplicity of his manners, in the spring and healthful chearfulness of his spirits. Always employed, his friends find him always at leisure. No less punctual in trifles, than steadfast in the performance of highest duties, he inflicts none of those small pains and discomforts which irregular men scatter about them, and which in the aggregate so often become formidable obstacles both to happiness and utility ; while on the contrary he bestows all the pleasures, and inspires all that ease of mind on those around him or connected with him, which perfect consistency, and (if such a word might be framed) absolute *reliability*, equally in small as in great concerns, cannot but inspire and bestow : when this too is softened without being weakened by kindness and gentleness. I know few men who so well deserve the character which an antient attributes to Marcus Cato, namely, that he was likest virtue, in as much as he seemed to act aright, not in obedience to any law or outward motive, but by the necessity of a happy nature, which could not act otherwise. As son, brother, husband, father, master, friend, he moves with firm yet light steps, alike unostentatious, and alike exem-



plary. As a writer, he has uniformly made his talents subservient to the best interests of humanity, of public virtue, and domestic piety ; his cause has ever been the cause of pure religion and of liberty, of national independence and of national illumination. When future critics shall weigh out his guerdon of praise and censure, it will be Southey the poet only, that will supply them with the scanty materials for the latter. They will likewise not fail to record, that as no man was ever a more constant friend, never had poet more friends and honorers among the good of all parties ; and that quacks in education, quacks in politics, and quacks in criticism were his only enemies.\*

\* It is not easy to estimate the effects which the example of a young man as highly distinguished for strict purity of disposition and conduct, as for intellectual power and literary acquirements, may produce on those of the same age with himself, especially on those of similar pursuits and congenial minds. For many years, my opportunities of intercourse with Mr. Southey have been rare, and at long intervals ; but I dwell with unabated pleasure on the strong and sudden, yet I trust not fleeting influence, which my moral being underwent on my acquaintance with him at Oxford, whither I had gone at the commencement of our Cambridge vacation on a visit to an old school-fellow. Not indeed on my moral or religious principles, for *they* had never been contaminated ; but in awakening the sense of the duty and dignity of making my actions accord with those principles, both in word and deed. The irregularities only not universal among the young men of my standing, which I always *knew* to be *wrong*, I then learnt to feel as *degrading* ; learnt to know that an opposite conduct, which was at that time considered by us as the easy virtue of cold and selfish prudence, might originate in the noblest emotions, in views the



#### CHAPTER IV.

*The lyrical ballads with the preface—Mr. Wordsworth's earlier poems—On fancy and imagination—The investigation of the distinction important to the fine arts.*

I have wandered far from the object in view, but as I fancied to myself readers who would respect the feelings that had tempted me from

most disinterested and imaginative. It is not however from grateful recollections only, that I have been impelled thus to leave these, my deliberate sentiments on record ; but in some sense as a debt of justice to the man, whose name has been so often connected with mine, for evil to which he is a stranger. As a specimen I subjoin part of a note, from "the Beauties of the Anti-jacobin," in which, having previously informed the public that I had been dishonor'd at Cambridge for preaching deism, at a time when for my youthful ardor in defence of christianity, I was decried as a bigot by the proselytes of French Phi- (or to speak more truly, Psi) losophy, the writer concludes with these words ; "since this time he has left his native country, commenced citizen of the world, *left his poor children fatherless, and his wife destitute. Ex his disce, his friends, LAMB and SOUTHEY.*" With severest truth it may be asserted, that it would not be easy to select two men more exemplary in their domestic affections, than those whose names were thus printed at full length as in the same rank of morals with a denounced infidel and fugitive, who had left his children *fatherless and his wife destitute!* Is it surprising, that many good men remained longer than perhaps they otherwise would have done, adverse to a party, which encouraged and openly rewarded the authors of such atrocious calumnies! Qualis es, nescio ; sed per quales agis, scio et doleo.



the main road ; so I dare calculate on not a few, who will warmly sympathize with them. At present it will be sufficient for my purpose, if I have proved, that Mr. Southey's writings no more than my own, furnished the original occasion to this fiction of a *new school* of poetry, and of clamors against its supposed founders and proselytes.

As little do I believe that " Mr. WORDSWORTH'S Lyrical Ballads " were in *themselves* the cause. I speak exclusively of the two volumes so entitled. A careful and repeated examination of these confirms me in the belief, that the omission of less than an hundred lines would have precluded nine-tenths of the criticism on this work. I hazard this declaration, however, on the supposition, that the reader had taken it up, as he would have done any other collection of poems purporting to derive their subjects or interests from the incidents of domestic or ordinary life, intermingled with higher strains of meditation which the poet utters in his own person and character ; with the proviso, that they were perused without knowledge of, or reference to, the author's peculiar opinions, and that the reader had not had his attention previously directed to those peculiarities. In these, as was actually the case with Mr. Southey's earlier works, the lines and passages which might have offended the general taste, would



have been considered as mere inequalities, and attributed to inattention, not to perversity of judgement. The men of business who had passed their lives chiefly in cities, and who might therefore be expected to derive the highest pleasure from acute notices of men and manners conveyed in easy, yet correct and pointed language; and all those who, reading but little poetry, are most stimulated with that species of it, which seems most distant from prose, would probably have passed by the volume altogether. Others more catholic in their taste, and yet habituated to be most pleased when most excited, would have contented themselves with deciding, that the author had been successful in proportion to the elevation of his style and subject. Not a few perhaps, might by their admiration of "the lines written near Tintern Abbey," those "left upon a Seat under a Yew Tree," the "old Cumberland beggar," and "Ruth," have been gradually led to peruse with kindred feeling the "Brothers," the "Hart leap well," and whatever other poems in that collection may be described as holding a middle place between those written in the highest and those in the humblest style; as for instance between the "Tintern Abbey," and "the Thorn," or the "Simon Lee." Should their taste submit to no further change, and still remain unreconciled to the colloquial



phrases, or the imitations of them, that are, more or less, scattered through the class last mentioned ; yet even from the small number of the latter, they would have deemed them but an inconsiderable subtraction from the merit of the whole work ; or, what is sometimes not unpleasing in the publication of a new writer, as serving to ascertain the natural tendency, and consequently the proper direction of the author's genius.

In the critical remarks therefore, prefixed and annexed to the " Lyrical Ballads," I believe, that we may safely rest, as the true origin of the unexampled opposition which Mr. Wordsworth's writings have been since doomed to encounter. The humbler passages in the poems themselves were dwelt on and cited to justify the rejection of the theory. What in and for themselves would have been either forgotten or forgiven as imperfections, or at least comparative failures, provoked direct hostility when announced as intentional, as the result of choice after full deliberation. Thus the poems, admitted by *all* as excellent, joined with those which had pleased the far *greater* number, though they formed two-thirds of the whole work, instead of being deemed (as in all right they should have been, even if we take for granted that the reader judged aright) an atonement for the few exceptions, gave wind



and fuel to the animosity against both the poems and the poet. In all perplexity there is a portion of fear, which predisposes the mind to anger. Not able to deny that the author possessed both genius and a powerful intellect, they felt *very positive*, but were not *quite certain*, that he might not be in the right, and they themselves in the wrong; an unquiet state of mind, which seeks alleviation by quarrelling with the occasion of it, and by wondering at the perverseness of the man, who had written a long and argumentative essay to persuade them, that

“Fair is foul, and foul is fair;”

in other words, that they had been all their lives admiring without judgement, and were now about to censure without reason.\*

\* In opinions of long continuance, and in which we had never before been molested by a single doubt, to be suddenly *convinced* of an *error*, is almost like being *convicted* of a fault. There is a state of mind, which is the direct antithesis of that, which takes place when we *make a bull*. The *bull* namely consists in the bringing together two incompatible thoughts, with the *sensation*, but without the *sense*, of their connection. The psychological condition, or that which constitutes the possibility of this state, being such disproportionate vividness of two distant thoughts, as extinguishes or obscures the consciousness of the intermediate images or conceptions, or wholly abstracts the attention from them. Thus in the well known bull, “*I was a fine child, but they changed me*;” the first conception expressed in the word “*I*,” is that of personal identity—*Ego contemplates*: the second expressed in the word “*me*,” is the visual image or object by which the mind represents to itself its past condition, or rather, its personal identity under the form in which it imagined itself previously to have existed,—



That this conjecture is not wide from the mark, I am induced to believe from the noticeable fact, which I can state on my own knowledge, that the same general censure should have been grounded almost by each different person on some different poem. Among those, whose candour and judgement I estimate highly, I distinctly remember six who expressed their objections to the "Lyrical Ballads" almost in the same words, and altogether to the same purport, at the same time admitting, that several of the poems had given them great pleasure ; and, strange as it might seem, the composition which one had cited as execrable,

*Ego contemplatus.* Now the change of one visual image for another involves in itself no absurdity, and becomes absurd only by its immediate juxta-position with the first thought, which is rendered possible by the whole attention being successively absorbed in each singly, so as not to notice the interjacent notion, "changed" which by its incongruity with the first thought, "*I*," constitutes the bull. Add only, that this process is facilitated by the circumstance of the words "*I*," and "*me*," being sometimes equivalent, and sometimes having a distinct meaning ; sometimes, namely, signifying the act of self-consciousness, sometimes the external image in and by which the mind represents that act to itself, the result and symbol of its individuality. Now suppose the direct contrary state, and you will have a distinct sense of the connection between two conceptions, without that *sensation* of such connection which is supplied by habit. The man *feels*, as if he were standing on his head, though he cannot but *see*, that he is truly standing on his feet. This, as a painful sensation, will of course have a tendency to associate itself with the person who occasions it ; even as persons, who have been by painful means restored from derangement, are known to feel an involuntary dislike towards their physician.



another had quoted as his favorite. I am indeed convinced in my own mind, that could the same experiment have been tried with these volumes, as was made in the well known story of the picture, the result would have been the same; the parts which had been covered by the number of the *black* spots on the one day, would be found equally *albo lapide notatæ* on the succeeding.

However this may be, it is assuredly hard and unjust to fix the attention on a few separate and insulated poems with as much aversion, as if they had been so many plague-spots on the whole work, instead of passing them over in silence, as so much blank paper, or leaves of bookseller's catalogue; especially, as no one pretends to have found immorality or indelicacy; and the poems therefore, at the worst, could only be regarded as so many light or inferior coins in a roleau of gold, not as so much alloy in a weight of bullion. A friend whose *talents* I hold in the highest respect, but whose *judgement* and strong sound sense I have had almost continued occasion to *revere*, making the usual complaints to me concerning both the style and subjects of Mr. Wordsworth's minor poems; I admitted that there were some few of the tales and incidents, in which I could not myself find a sufficient cause for their having been recorded in metre. I mentioned the "Alice



Fell" as an instance; "nay," replied my friend with more than usual quickness of manner, "I cannot agree with you *there!* that I own *does* seem to me a remarkably pleasing poem." In the "Lyrical Ballads" (for my experience does not enable me to extend the remark equally unqualified to the two subsequent volumes) I have heard at different times, and from different individuals every single poem *extolled* and *reprobated*, with the exception of those of loftier kind, which as was before observed, seem to have won universal praise. This fact of itself would have made me diffident in my censures, had not a still stronger ground been furnished by the strange contrast of the heat and long continuance of the opposition, with the nature of the faults stated as justifying it. The seductive faults, the *dulcia vitia* of Cowley, Marini, or Darwin might reasonably be thought capable of corrupting the public judgement for half a century, and require a twenty years war, campaign after campaign, in order to dethrone the usurper and re-establish the legitimate taste. But that a downright simpleness, under the affectation of simplicity, prosaic words in feeble metre, silly thoughts in childish phrases, and a preference of mean, degrading, or at best trivial associations and characters, should succeed in forming a school of imitators, a company of almost *religious* admirers, and this too



among young men of ardent minds, liberal education, and not

“with academic laurels unbestowed;”

and that this bare and bald *counterfeit* of poetry, which is characterized as *below* criticism, should for nearly twenty years have well-nigh *engrossed* criticism, as the main, if not the only, *butt* of review, magazine, pamphlets, poem, and paragraph;—this is indeed matter of wonder! Of yet greater is it, that the contest should still continue as\* undecided as that between Bac-

\* Without however the apprehensions attributed to the *Pagan* reformer of the poetic republic. If we may judge from the preface to the recent collection of his poems, Mr. W. would have answered with Xanthias—

Σὺ δ' ἔκ εἰσας τὸν ψοφὸν τῶν ῥημάτων,  
Καὶ τὰς ἀπειλὰς; ΞΑΝ. ἔμα Δί', ἐδ' ἐφροντίσα.

And here let me dare hint to the authors of the numerous parodies, and pretended imitations of Mr. Wordsworth's style, that at once to conceal and convey wit and wisdom in the semblance of folly and dulness, as is done in the clowns and fools, nay even in the Dogberry, of our Shakespear, is doubtless a proof of genius, or at all events, of satiric talent; but that the attempt to ridicule a silly and childish poem, by writing another still sillier and still more childish, can only prove (if it prove any thing at all) that the parodist is a still greater blockhead than the original writer, and what is far worse, a *malignant* coxcomb to boot. The talent for mimicry seems strongest where the human race are most degraded. The poor, naked, half human savages of New Holland were found excellent mimics: and in civilized society, minds of the very lowest stamp alone satirize by *copying*. At least the difference, which must blend with and balance the likeness, in order to constitute a just imitation, existing here merely in caricature, detracts from the libeller's heart, without adding an iota to the credit of his understanding.



chus and the frogs in Aristophanes; when the former descended to the realms of the departed to bring back the spirit of old and genuine poesy.

Χορος Βατραχων; Διονυσος

X. βρεκεκεκεξ, κοαξ, κοαξ!

Δ. αλλ' εξολοισθ' αυτω κοαξ.  
 εδεν γαρ εσι, η κοαξ.  
 οιμωζετ: ε μοι μελει.

X. αλλα μην κεκραξομεσθα  
 γ'οποσον η φαρυγγ αν ημων  
 χανδχνη δι ημερας  
 βρεκεκεκεξ, κοαξ, κοαξ!

Δ. τετω γαρ ε νικησετε.

X. εδε μεν ημας συ παντως.

Δ. εδε μεν υμεις γε δη με  
 εδεποτε κεκραξομαι γαρ  
 καν με δει δι ημερας,  
 εως αν υμων επικρατησω τω Κοαξ!

X. βρεκεκεκεξ, ΚΟΑΞ, ΚΟΑΞ!

During the last year of my residence at Cambridge, I became acquainted with Mr. Wordsworth's first publication entitled "Descriptive Sketches;" and seldom, if ever, was the emergence of an original poetic genius above the literary horizon more evidently announced. In the form, style, and manner of the whole poem, and in the structure of the particular lines and periods, there is an harshness and acerbity connected and combined with words and images



all a-glow, which might recall those products of the vegetable world, where gorgeous blossoms rise out of the hard and thorny rind and shell, within which the rich fruit was elaborating. The language was not only peculiar and strong, but at times knotty and contorted, as by its own impatient strength; while the novelty and struggling crowd of images acting in conjunction with the difficulties of the style, demanded always a greater closeness of attention, than poetry, (at all events, than descriptive poetry) has a right to claim. It not seldom therefore justified the complaint of obscurity. In the following extract I have sometimes fancied, that I saw an emblem of the poem itself, and of the author's genius as it was then displayed.

“ 'Tis storm; and hid in mist from hour to hour,  
 All day the floods a deepening murmur pour;  
 The sky is veiled, and every cheerful sight:  
 Dark is the region as with coming night;  
 And yet what frequent bursts of overpowering light!  
 Triumphant on the bosom of the storm,  
 Glances the fire-clad eagle's wheeling form;  
 Eastward, in long perspective glittering, shine  
 The wood-crowned cliffs that o'er the lake recline;  
 Wide o'er the Alps a hundred streams unfold,  
 At once to pillars turn'd that flame with gold;  
 Behind his sail the peasant strives to shun  
 The West, that burns like one dilated sun,  
 Where in a mighty crucible expire  
 The mountains, glowing hot, like coals of fire.”



The poetic PSYCHE, in its process to full developement, undergoes as many changes as its Greek name-sake, the\* butterfly. And it is remarkable how soon genius clears and purifies itself from the faults and errors of its earliest products; faults which, in its earliest compositions, are the more obtrusive and confluent, because as heterogeneous elements, which had only a temporary use, they constitute the very *ferment*, by which themselves are carried off. Or we may compare them to some diseases, which must work on the humours, and be thrown out on the surface, in order to secure the patient from their future recurrence. I was in my twenty-fourth year, when I had the happiness of knowing Mr. Wordsworth personally, and while memory lasts, I shall hardly forget the sudden effect produced on my mind, by his recitation of a manuscript poem, which

\* The fact, that in Greek Psyche is the common name for the soul, and the butterfly, is thus alluded to in the following stanza from an unpublished poem of the author :

“The butterfly the ancient Grecians made  
The soul’s fair emblem, and its only name—  
But of the soul, escaped the slavish trade  
Of mortal life ! For in this earthly frame  
Our’s is the reptile’s lot, much toil, much blame,  
Manifold motions making little speed,  
And to deform and kill the things, whereon we feed.”

S. T. C.



still remains unpublished, but of which the stanza, and tone of style, were the same as those of the "Female Vagrant" as originally printed in the first volume of the "Lyrical Ballads." There was here, no mark of strained thought, or forced diction, no crowd or turbulence of imagery, and, as the poet hath himself well described in his lines "on re-visiting the Wye," manly reflection, and human associations had given both variety, and an additional interest to natural objects, which in the passion and appetite of the first love they had seemed to him neither to need or permit. The occasional obscurities, which had risen from an imperfect controul over the resources of his native language, had almost wholly disappeared, together with that worse defect of arbitrary and illogical phrases, at once hackneyed, and fantastic, which hold so distinguished a place in the *technique* of ordinary poetry, and will, more or less, alloy the earlier poems of the truest genius, unless the attention has been specifically directed to their worthlessness and incongruity.\* I did not perceive any thing particular in the mere style of the poem alluded to during its recitation, except indeed such difference as was

\* Mr. Wordsworth, even in his two earliest "the Evening Walk and the Descriptive Sketches," is more free from this latter defect than most of the young poets his contempora-



not separable from the thought and manner ; and the Spencerian stanza, which always, more or less, recalls to the reader's mind Spencer's own style, would doubtless have authorized in my then opinion a more frequent descent to the phrases of ordinary life, than could without an ill effect have been hazarded in the heroic couplet. It was not however the freedom from false taste, whether as to common defects, or to those more properly his own, which made so unusual an impression on my feelings immediately, and subsequently on my judgement. It was the union of deep feeling with profound thought ; the fine balance of truth in observing with the imaginative faculty in modifying the objects observed ; and above all the original gift of spreading the tone, the *atmosphere*, and with

ries. It may however be exemplified, together with the harsh and obscure construction, in which he more often offended, in the following lines :—

“ 'Mid stormy vapours ever driving by,  
Where ospreys, cormorants, and herons cry ;  
Where hardly given the hopeless waste to cheer,  
Denied the bread of life the foodful ear,  
Dwindles the pear on autumn's latest spray,  
And *apple sickens* pale in summer's ray ;  
*Ev'n here content has fixed her smiling reign*  
*With independence, child of high disdain.*”

I hope, I need not say, that I have quoted these lines for no other purpose than to make my meaning fully understood. It is to be regretted that Mr. Wordsworth has not republished these two poems entire.



it the depth and height of the ideal world around forms, incidents, and situations, of which, for the common view, custom had be-  
dimmed all the lustre, had dried up the sparkle and the dew drops. "To find no contradic-  
tion in the union of old and new; to contemplate the ANCIENT of days and all his works with feelings as fresh, as if all had then sprang forth at the first creative fiat; characterizes the mind that feels the riddle of the world, and may help to unravel it. To carry on the feelings of childhood into the powers of manhood; to combine the child's sense of wonder and novelty with the appearances, which every day for perhaps forty years had rendered familiar;

"With sun and moon and stars throughout the year,  
And man and woman;"

this is the character and privilege of genius, and one of the marks which distinguish genius from talents. And therefore is it the prime merit of genius and its most unequivocal mode of manifestation, so to represent familiar objects as to awaken in the minds of others a kindred feeling concerning them and that freshness of sensation which is the constant accompaniment of mental, no less than of bodily, convalescence. Who has not a thousand times seen snow fall on water? Who has not watched it with a new feeling, from the time that he has read Burn's comparison of sensual pleasure

"To snow that falls upon a river  
A moment white—then gone for ever!"



In poems, equally as in philosophic disquisitions, genius produces the strongest impressions of novelty, while it rescues the most admitted truths from the impotence caused by the very circumstance of their universal admission. Truths of all others the most awful and mysterious, yet being at the same time of universal interest, are too often considered as so true, that they lose all the life and efficiency of truth, and lie bed-ridden in the dormitory of the soul, side by side, with the most despised and exploded errors." *THE FRIEND*,\* page 76, No. 5.

This excellence, which in all Mr. Wordsworth's writings is more or less predominant, and which constitutes the character of his mind, I no sooner felt, than I sought to understand. Repeated meditations led me first to suspect, (and a more intimate analysis of the human faculties, their appropriate marks, functions, and effects matured my conjecture into full conviction) that fancy and imagination were two distinct and widely different faculties, instead of being, according to the general belief, either two names with one meaning, or at furthest, the lower and higher degree of one and the

\* As "the Friend" was printed on stamp sheets, and sent only by the post to a very limited number of subscribers, the author has felt less objection to quote from it, though a work of his own. To the public at large indeed it is the same as a volume in manuscript.



same power. It is not, I own, easy to conceive a more opposite translation of the Greek *Phantasia*, than the Latin *Imaginatio*; but it is equally true that in all societies there exists an instinct of growth, a certain collective, unconscious good sense working progressively to desynonymize\* those words originally of the same meaning, which the conflux of dialects had supplied to the more homogeneous languages, as the Greek and German: and

\* This is effected either by giving to the one word a general, and to the other an exclusive use; as “to put on the back” and “to indorse;” or by an actual distinction of meanings as “naturalist,” and “physician;” or by difference of relation as “I” and “Me;” (each of which the rustics of our different provinces still use in all the cases singular of the first personal pronoun). Even the mere difference, or corruption, in the *pronunciation* of the same word, if it have become general, will produce a new word with a distinct signification; thus “property” and “propriety;” the latter of which, even to the time of Charles II. was the *written* word for all the senses of both. Thus too “mister” and “master” both hasty pronunciations of the same word “magister,” “mistress,” and “miss,” “if,” and “give,” &c. &c. There is a sort of *minim immortal* among the animalcula infusoria which has not naturally either birth, or death, absolute beginning, or absolute end: for at a certain period a small point appears on its back, which deepens and lengthens till the creature divides into two, and the same process recommences in each of the halves now become integral. This may be a fanciful, but it is by no means a bad emblem of the formation of words, and may facilitate the conception, how immense a nomenclature may be organized from a few simple sounds by rational beings in a social state. For each new application, or excitement of the same sound, will call forth a different sensation, which cannot but affect the pronunciation. The after recollection of the sound, without the same vivid sensation, will modify it still further; till at length all trace of the original likeness is worn away.



which the same cause, joined with accidents of translation from original works of different countries, occasion in mixt languages like our own. The first and most important point to be proved is, that two conceptions perfectly distinct are confused under one and the same word, and (this done) to appropriate that word exclusively to one meaning, and the synonyme (should there be one) to the other. But if (as will be often the case in the arts and sciences) no synonyme exists, we must either invent or borrow a word. In the present instance the appropriation had already begun, and been legitimated in the derivative adjective: Milton had a highly *imaginative*, Cowley a very *fanciful* mind. If therefore I should succeed in establishing the actual existences of two faculties generally different, the nomenclature would be at once determined. To the faculty by which I had characterized Milton, we should confine the term *imagination*; while the other would be contra-distinguished as *fancy*. Now were it once fully ascertained, that this division is no less grounded in nature, than that of delirium from mania, or Otway's

“Lutes, lobsters, seas of milk, and ships of amber,”  
from Shakespear's

“What! have his daughters brought him to this pass?”  
or from the preceding apostrophe to the elements;  
the theory of the fine arts, and of poetry in par-



ticular, could not, I thought, but derive some additional and important light. It would in its immediate effects furnish a torch of guidance to the philosophical critic ; and ultimately to the poet himself. In energetic minds, truth soon changes by domestication into power ; and from directing in the discrimination and appraisal of the product, becomes influence in the production. To admire on principle, is the only way to imitate without loss of originality.

It has been already hinted, that metaphysics and psychology have long been my hobby-horse. But to have a hobby-horse, and to be vain of it, are so commonly found together, that they pass almost for the same. I trust therefore, that there will be more good humour than contempt, in the smile with which the reader chastises my self-complacency, if I confess myself uncertain, whether the satisfaction from the perception of a truth new to myself may not have been rendered more poignant by the conceit, that it would be equally so to the public. There was a time, certainly, in which I took some little credit to myself, in the belief that I had been the first of my countrymen, who had pointed out the diverse meaning of which the two terms were capable, and analyzed the faculties to which they should be appropriated. Mr. W. Taylor's recent volume of synonymes I



have not yet seen ;\* but his specification of the terms in question has been clearly shown to be both insufficient and erroneous by Mr. Wordsworth in the preface added to the late collection of his " Lyrical Ballads and other poems." The explanation which Mr. Wordsworth has himself given, will be found to differ from mine,

\* I ought to have added, with the exception of a single sheet which I accidentally met with at the printers. Even from this scanty specimen, I found it impossible to doubt the talent, or not to admire the ingenuity of the author. That his distinctions were for the greater part unsatisfactory to *my* mind, proves nothing against their accuracy ; but it may possibly be serviceable to him in case of a second edition, if I take this opportunity of suggesting the query ; whether he may not have been occasionally misled, by having assumed, as to me he appeared to have done, the non-existence of *any* absolute synonymes in our language ? Now I cannot but think, that there are many which remain for our posterity to distinguish and appropriate, and which I regard as so much reversionary wealth in our mother-tongue. When two distinct meanings are confounded under one or more words, (and such must be the case, as sure as our knowledge is progressive and of course imperfect) erroneous consequences will be drawn, and what is true in one sense of the word, will be affirmed as true in toto. Men of research startled by the consequences, seek in the things themselves (whether in or out of the mind) for a knowledge of the fact, and having discovered the difference, remove the equivocation either by the substitution of a new word, or by the appropriation of one of the two or more words, that had before been used promiscuously. When this distinction has been so naturalized and of such general currency, that the language itself does as it were *think* for us (like the sliding rule which is the mechanics safe substitute for arithmetical knowledge) we then say, that it is evident to *common sense*. Common sense, therefore, differs in different ages. What was born and christened in the schools passes by degrees into the world at large, and becomes the property of the market and the tea-table. At least I can discover no other meaning of the term, *common*



chiefly perhaps, as our objects are different. It could scarcely indeed happen otherwise, from the advantage I have enjoyed of frequent conversation with him on a subject to which a poem of his own first directed my attention, and my conclusions concerning which, he had made more lucid to myself by many happy instances drawn from the operation of natural objects on the mind. But it was Mr. Wordsworth's purpose to consider the influences of fancy and imagination as they are manifested in poetry, and from the different effects to conclude their diversity in kind; while it is my object to investigate the seminal principle, and then from the kind to deduce the degree. My friend has drawn a masterly sketch of the branches with their *poetic* fruitage. I wish to add the trunk, and even the roots as far as they lift themselves above ground, and are visible to the naked eye of our common consciousness.

Yet even in this attempt I am aware, that I shall be obliged to draw more largely on the

*sense*, if it is to convey any specific difference from sense and judgement in genere, and where it is not used scholastically for the *universal reason*. Thus in the reign of Charles II. the philosophic world was called to arms by the moral sophisms of Hobbs, and the ablest writers exerted themselves in the detection of an error, which a school-boy would now be able to confute by the mere recollection, that *compulsion* and *obligation* conveyed two ideas perfectly disparate, and that what appertained to the one, had been falsely transferred to the other by a mere confusion of terms.



reader's attention, than so immethodical a miscellany can authorize; when in such a work (*the Ecclesiastical Policy*) of such a mind as Hooker's, the judicious author, though no less admirable for the perspicuity than for the port and dignity of his language; and though he wrote for men of learning in a learned age; saw nevertheless occasion to anticipate and guard against "complaints of obscurity," as often as he was to trace his subject "to the highest well-spring and fountain." Which, (continues he) "because men are not accustomed to, the pains we take are more needful a great deal, than acceptable; and the matters we handle, seem by reason of newness (till the mind grow better acquainted with them) dark and intricate." I would gladly therefore spare both myself and others this labor, if I knew how without it to present an intelligible statement of my poetic creed; not as my *opinions*, which weigh for nothing, but as deductions from established premises conveyed in such a form, as is calculated either to effect a fundamental conviction, or to receive a fundamental confutation. If I may dare once more adopt the words of Hooker, "they, unto whom we shall seem tedious, are in no wise injured by us, because it is in their own hands to spare that labour, which they are not willing to endure." Those at least, let me be permitted to add,



who have taken so much pains to render me ridiculous for a perversion of taste, and have supported the charge by attributing strange notions to me on no other authority than their own conjectures, owe it to themselves as well as to me not to refuse their attention to my own statement of the theory, which I *do* acknowledge; or shrink from the trouble of examining the grounds on which I rest it, or the arguments which I offer in its justification.



## CHAPTER V.

### *On the law of association—Its history traced from Aristotle to Hartley..*

There have been men in all ages, who have been impelled as by an instinct to propose their own nature as a problem, and who devote their attempts to its solution. The first step was to construct a table of distinctions, which they seem to have formed on the principle of the absence or presence of the WILL. Our various sensations, perceptions, and movements were classed as active or passive, or as media partaking of both. A still finer distinction was soon established between the voluntary and the spontaneous. In our perceptions we seem to ourselves merely passive to an external power, whether as a mirror reflecting the landscape, or as a blank canvas on which some unknown hand paints it. For it is worthy of notice, that the latter, or the system of idealism may be traced to sources equally remote with the former, or materialism; and Berkeley can boast an ancestry at least as venerable as Gassendi or Hobbs. These conjectures, however, concern-



ing the mode in which our perceptions originated, could not alter the natural difference of *things* and *thoughts*. In the former, the cause appeared wholly external, while in the latter, sometimes our will interfered as the producing or determining cause, and sometimes our nature seemed to act by a mechanism of its own, without any conscious effort of the will, or even against it. Our inward experiences were thus arranged in three separate classes, the passive sense, or what the school-men call the merely receptive quality of the mind; the voluntary, and the spontaneous, which holds the middle place between both. \* But it is not in human nature to meditate on any mode of action, without enquiring after the law that governs it; and in the explanation of the spontaneous movements of our being, the metaphysician took the lead of the anatomist and natural philosopher. In Egypt, Palestine, Greece, and India the analysis of the mind had reached its noon and manhood, while experimental research was still in its dawn and infancy. For many, very many centuries, it has been difficult to advance a new truth, or even a new error, in the philosophy of the intellect or morals. With regard, however, to the laws that direct the spontaneous movements of thought and the principle of their intellectual mechanism there exists, it has been asserted, an important ex-



ception most honorable to the moderns, and in the merit of which our own country claims the largest share. Sir James Mackintosh (who amid the variety of his talents and attainments is not of less repute for the depth and accuracy of his philosophical enquiries, than for the eloquence with which he is said to render their most difficult results perspicuous, and the driest attractive) affirmed in the lectures, delivered by him at Lincoln's Inn Hall, that the law of association as established in the contemporaneity of the original impressions, formed the basis of all true psychology; and any ontological or metaphysical science not contained in such (i. e. empirical) psychology was but a web of abstractions and generalizations. Of this prolific truth, of this great fundamental law, he declared HOBBS to have been the original *discoverer*, while its full application to the whole intellectual system we owe to David Hartley; who stood in the same relation to Hobbs as Newton to Kepler; the law of association being that to the mind, which gravitation is to matter.

Of the former clause in this assertion, as it respects the comparative merits of the ancient metaphysicians, including their commentators, the school-men, and of the modern French and British philosophers from Hobbs to Hume, Hartley and Condeliac, this is not the place to speak. So wide indeed is the chasm between



this gentleman's philosophical creed and mine, that so far from being able to join hands, we could scarce make our voices intelligible to each other: and to *bridge* it over, would require more time, skill and power than I believe myself to possess. But the latter clause involves for the greater part a mere question of fact and history, and the accuracy of the statement is to be tried by documents rather than reasoning.

First then, I deny Hobbs's claim in toto: for he had been anticipated by Des Cartes whose work "*De Methodo*" preceded Hobbs's "*De Natura Humana*," by more than a year. But what is of much more importance, Hobbs builds nothing on the principle which he had announced. He does not even announce it, as differing in any respect from the general laws of material motion and impact: nor was it, indeed, possible for him so to do, compatibly with his system, which was exclusively material and mechanical. Far otherwise is it with Des Cartes; greatly as he too in his after writings (and still more egregiously his followers De la Forge, and others) obscured the truth by their attempts to explain it on the theory of nervous fluids, and material configurations. But in his interesting work "*De Methodo*," Des Cartes relates the circumstance which first led him to meditate on this subject, and which since then has been often noticed and employed as an



instance and illustration of the law. A child who with its eyes bandaged had lost several of his fingers by amputation, continued to complain for many days successively of pains, now in his joint and now in that of the very fingers which had been cut off. Des Cartes was led by this incident to reflect on the uncertainty with which we attribute any particular place to any inward pain or uneasiness, and proceeded after long consideration to establish it as a general law ; that contemporaneous impressions, whether images or sensations, recal each other mechanically. On this principle, as a ground work, he built up the whole system of human language, as one continued process of association. He showed, in what sense not only general terms, but generic images (under the name of abstract ideas) actually existed, and in what consists their nature and power. As one word may become the general exponent of many, so by association a simple image may represent a whole class. But in truth Hobbs himself makes no claims to any discovery, and introduces this law of association, or (in his own language) *discursûs mentalis*, as an admitted fact, in the *solution* alone of which, this by causes purely physiological, he arrogates any originality. His system is briefly this ; whenever the senses are impinged on by external objects, whether by the rays of light reflected



from them, or by effluxes of their finer particles, there results a correspondent motion of the innermost and subtlest organs. This motion constitutes a *representation*, and there remains an *impression* of the same, or a certain disposition to repeat the same motion. Whenever we feel several objects at the same time, the *impressions* that are left (or in the language of Mr. Hume, the *ideas*) are linked together. Whenever therefore any one of the movements, which constitute a complex impression, are renewed through the senses, the others succeed mechanically. It follows of necessity therefore that Hobbs, as well as Hartley and all others who derive association from the connection and interdependence of the supposed matter, the movements of which constitute our thoughts, *must* have reduced all its forms to the one law of time. But even the merit of announcing this law with philosophic precision cannot be fairly conceded to him. For the objects of any two ideas\* need not have co-existed in the same

\* I here use the word "idea" in Mr. Hume's sense on account of its general currency among the English metaphysicians; though against my own judgement, for I believe that the vague use of this word has been the cause of much error and more confusion. The word, *ἰδέα*, in its original sense as used by Pindar, Aristophanes, and in the gospel of Matthew, represented the visual abstraction of a distant object, when we see the whole without distinguishing its parts. Plato adopted it as a technical term, and as the antithesis to *εἰδωλα*, or sensuous images; the transient and perishable



sensation in order to become mutually associable. The same result will follow when one only of the two ideas has been represented by the senses, and the other by the memory.

Long however before either Hobbs or Des Cartes the law of association had been defined,

emblems, or mental words, of ideas. The ideas themselves he considered as mysterious powers, living, seminal, formative, and exempt from time. In this sense the word became the property of the Platonic school; and it seldom occurs in Aristotle, without some such phrase annexed to it, as according to Plato, or as Plato says. Our English writers to the end of Charles 2nd's reign, or somewhat later, employed it either in the original sense, or platonically, or in a sense nearly correspondent to our present use of the substantive, Ideal, always however opposing it, more or less, to image, whether of present or absent objects. The reader will not be displeased with the following interesting exemplification from Bishop Jeremy Taylor. "St. Lewis the King sent Ivo Bishop of Chartres on an embassy, and he told, that he met a grave and stately matron on the way with a censor of fire in one hand, and a vessel of water in the other; and observing her to have a melancholy, religious, and phantastic deportment and look, he asked her what those symbols meant, and what she meant to do with her fire and water; she answered, my purpose is with the fire to burn paradise, and with my water to quench the flames of hell, that men may serve God purely for the love of God. But we rarely meet with such spirits which love virtue so metaphysically as *to abstract her from all sensible compositions, and love the purity of the idea.*" Des Cartes having introduced into his philosophy the fanciful hypothesis of *material ideas*, or certain configurations of the brain, which were as so many moulds to the influxes of the external world; Mr. Lock adopted the term, but extended its signification to whatever is the immediate object of the mind's attention or consciousness. Mr. Hume distinguishing those representations which are accompanied with a sense of a present object, from those reproduced by the mind itself, designated the former by *impressions*, and confined the word *idea* to the latter.



and its important functions set forth by Melanchthon, Ammerbach, and Ludovicus Vives ; more especially by the last. Phantasia, it is to be noticed, is employed by Vives to express the mental power of comprehension, or the *active* function of the mind ; and imaginatio for the receptivity (*vis receptiva*) of impressions, or for the *passive* perception. The power of combination he appropriates to the former : “ quæ singula et simpliciter acceperat imaginatio, ea conjungit et disjungit phantasia.” And the law by which the thoughts are spontaneously presented follows thus ; “ quæ simul sunt a phantasia comprehensa si alterutrum occurrat, solet secum alterum representare.” To time therefore he subordinates all the other exciting causes of association. The soul proceeds “ a causa ad effectum, ab hoc ad instrumentum, a parte ad totum ;” thence to the place, from place to person, and from this to whatever preceded or followed, all as being parts of a total impression, each of which may recal the other. The apparent springs “ Saltus vel transitus etiam longissimos,” he explains by the same thought having been a component part of two or more total impressions. Thus “ ex Scipione venio in cogitationem potentiae Turcicae proper victorias ejus in eâ parte Asiae in qua regnabat Antiochus.”

But from Vives I pass at once to the source



of his doctrines, and (as far as we can judge from the remains yet extant of Greek philosophy) as to the first, so to the fullest and most perfect enunciation of the associative principle, viz. to the writings of Aristotle; and of these principally to the books "*De Anima*," "*De Memoria*," and that which is entitled in the old translations "*Parva Naturalia*." In as much as later writers have either deviated from, or added to his doctrines, they appear to me to have introduced either error or groundless supposition.

In the first place it is to be observed, that Aristotle's positions on this subject are unmixed with fiction. The wise Stagyrice speaks of no successive particles propagating motion like billiard balls (as Hobbs;) nor of nervous or animal spirits, where inanimate and irrational solids are thawed down, and distilled, or filtrated by ascension, into living and intelligent fluids, that etch and re-etch engravings on the brain, (as the followers of Des Cartes, and the humoral pathologists in general;) nor of an oscillating ether which was to effect the same service for the nerves of the brain considered as solid fibres, as the animal spirits perform for them under the notion of hollow tubes (as *Hartley* teaches)—nor finally, (with yet more recent dreamers) of chemical compositions by elective affinity, or of an electric light at once



the immediate object and the ultimate organ of inward vision, which rises to the brain like an Aurora Borealis, and there disporting in various shapes (as the balance of plus and minus, or negative and positive, is destroyed or re-established) images out both past and present. Aristotle delivers a just *theory* without pretending to an *hypothesis*; or in other words a comprehensive survey of the different facts, and of their relations to each other without *supposition*, i. e. a fact *placed under* a number of facts, as their common support and explanation; tho' in the majority of instances these hypotheses or suppositions better deserve the name of ὑποποιήσεις, or *suffictions*. He uses indeed the word Κίνησεις, to express what we call representations or ideas, but he carefully distinguishes them from material motion, designating the latter always by annexing the words ἐν τόπῳ, or κατὰ τόπον. On the contrary in his treatise "De Anima," he excludes place and motion from all the operations of thought, whether representations or volitions, as attributes utterly and absurdly heterogeneous.

The *general law* of association, or more accurately, the *common condition* under which all exciting causes act, and in which they may be generalized, according to Aristotle is this. Ideas by having been together acquire a power of recalling each other; or every partial represen-



tation awakes the total representation of which it had been a part. In the practical determination of this common principle to particular recollections, he admits five agents or occasioning causes: 1st, connection in time, whether simultaneous, preceding or successive; 2nd, vicinity or connection in space; 3rd, interdependence or necessary connection, as cause and effect; 4th, likeness; and 5th, contrast. As an additional solution of the occasional seeming chasms in the continuity of reproduction he proves, that movements or ideas possessing one or the other of these five characters had passed through the mind as intermediate links, sufficiently clear to recal other parts of the same total impressions with which they had co-existed, though not vivid enough to excite that degree of attention which is requisite for distinct recollection, or as we may aptly express it, *after-consciousness*. In association then consists the whole mechanism of the reproduction of impressions, in the Aristotelelian Psychology. It is the universal law of the *passive* fancy and *mechanical* memory; that which supplies to all other faculties their objects, to all thought the elements of its materials.

In consulting the excellent commentary of St. Thomas Aquinas on the Parva Naturalia of Aristotle, I was struck at once with its close resemblance to Hume's essay on association.



The main thoughts were the same in both, the *order* of the thoughts was the same, and even the illustrations differed only by Hume's occasional substitution of more modern examples. I mentioned the circumstance to several of my literary acquaintances, who admitted the closeness of the resemblance, and that it seemed too great to be explained by mere coincidence ; but they thought it improbable that Hume should have held the pages of the angelic Doctor worth turning over. But some time after Mr. Payne, of the King's mews, shewed Sir James Mackintosh some odd volumes of St. Thomas Aquinas, partly perhaps from having heard that Sir James (then Mr.) Mackintosh had in his lectures past a high encomium on this canonized philosopher, but chiefly from the fact, that the volumes had belonged to Mr. Hume, and had here and there marginal marks and notes of reference in his own hand writing. Among these volumes was that which contains the *Parva Naturalia*, in the old latin version, swathed and swaddled in the commentary afore mentioned !

It remains then for me, first to state wherein Hartley differs from Aristotle ; then, to exhibit the grounds of my conviction, that he differed only to err ; and next as the result, to shew, by what influences of the choice and judgment the associative power becomes either memory or fancy ; and, in conclusion, to appropriate



the remaining offices of the mind to the reason, and the imagination. With my best efforts to be as perspicuous as the nature of language will permit on such a subject, I earnestly solicit the good wishes and friendly patience of my readers, while I thus go "sounding on my dim and perilous way."



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CHAPTER VI.

*That Hartley's system, as far as it differs from that of Aristotle, is neither tenable in theory, nor founded in facts.*

Of Hartley's hypothetical vibrations in his hypothetical oscillating ether of the nerves, which is the first and most obvious distinction between his system and that of Aristotle, I shall say little. This, with all other similar attempts to render *that* an object of the sight which has no relation to sight, has been already sufficiently exposed by the younger Reimarus, Maasse, &c. as outraging the very axioms of mechanics in a scheme, the merit of which consists in its being mechanical. Whether any other philosophy be possible, but the mechanical; and again, whether the mechanical system can have any claim to be called philosophy; are questions for another place. It is, however, certain, that as long as we deny the former, and affirm the latter, we must bewilder ourselves, whenever we would pierce into the *adyta* of causation; and all that laborious conjecture can do, is to fill up the gaps of fancy. Under that despotism of the eye (the emanci-



pation from which Pythagoras by his *numeral*, and Plato by his *musical*, symbols, and both by geometric discipline, aimed at, as the first προπαιδευτικόν of the mind)--under this strong sensuous influence, we are restless because invisible things are not the objects of vision; and metaphysical systems, for the most part, become popular, not for their truth, but in proportion as they attribute to causes a susceptibility of being *seen*, if only our visual organs were sufficiently powerful.

From a hundred possible confutations let one suffice. According to this system the idea or vibration *a* from the external object A becomes associable with the idea or vibration *m* from the external object M, because the oscillation *a* propagated itself so as to re-produce the oscillation *m*. But the original impression from M was essentially different from the impression A: unless therefore different causes may produce the same effect, the vibration *a* could never produce the vibration *m*: and this therefore could never be the means, by which *a* and *m* are associated. To understand this, the attentive reader need only be reminded, that the ideas are themselves, in Hartley's system, nothing more than their appropriate configurative vibrations. It is a mere delusion of the fancy to conceive the pre-existence of the ideas, in any chain of association, as so many



differently colored billiard-balls in contact, so that when an object, the billiard-stick, strikes the first or white ball, the same motion propagates itself through the red, green, blue, black, &c. and sets the whole in motion. No! we must suppose the very same force, which *constitutes* the white ball, to *constitute* the red or black; or the idea of a circle to *constitute* the idea of a triangle; which is impossible.

But it may be said, that, by the sensations from the objects A and M, the nerves have acquired a disposition to the vibrations *a* and *m*, and therefore *a* need only be repeated in order to re-produce *m*. Now we will grant, for a moment, the possibility of such a disposition in a material nerve, which yet seems scarcely less absurd than to say, that a weather-cock had acquired a *habit* of turning to the east, from the wind having been so long in that quarter: for if it be replied, that we must take in the circumstance of *life*, what then becomes of the mechanical philosophy? And what is the *nerve*, but the flint which the wag placed in the pot as the first ingredient of his stone-broth, requiring only salt, turnips and mutton, for the remainder! But if we waive this, and pre-suppose the actual existence of such a disposition; two cases are possible. Either, every idea has its own nerve and correspondent oscillation, or this is not the case. If the latter be the truth,



we should gain nothing by these dispositions; for then, every nerve having several dispositions, when the motion of any other nerve is propagated into it, there will be no ground or cause present, why exactly the oscillation *m* should arise, rather than any other to which it was equally pre-disposed. But if we take the former, and let every idea have a nerve of its own, then every nerve must be capable of propagating its motion into many other nerves; and again, there is no reason assignable, why the vibration *m* should arise, rather than any other *ad libitum*.

It is fashionable to smile at Hartley's vibrations and vibratiuncles; and his work has been re-edited by Priestley, with the omission of the *material* hypothesis. But Hartley was too great a man, too coherent a thinker, for this to have been done, either consistently or to any wise purpose. For all other parts of his system, as far as they are peculiar to that system, once removed from their mechanical basis, not only lose their main support, but the very motive which led to their adoption. Thus the principle of *contemporaneity*, which Aristotle had made the common *condition* of all the laws of association, Hartley was constrained to represent as being itself the sole *law*. For to what law can the action of *material* atoms be subject, but that of proximity in *place*? And to



what law can their *motions* be subjected, but that of *time*? Again, from this results inevitably, that the will, the reason, the judgment, and the understanding, instead of being the determining causes of association, must needs be represented as its *creatures*, and among its mechanical *effects*. Conceive, for instance, a broad stream, winding through a mountainous country with an indefinite number of currents, varying and running into each other according as the gusts chance to blow from the opening of the mountains. The temporary union of several currents in one, so as to form the main current of the moment, would present an accurate image of Hartley's theory of the will.

Had this been really the case, the consequence would have been, that our whole life would be divided between the despotism of outward impressions, and that of senseless and passive memory. Take his law in its highest abstraction and most philosophical form, viz. that every partial representation recalls the total representation of which it was a part; and the law becomes nugatory, were it only from its universality. In practice it would indeed be mere lawlessness. Consider, how immense must be the sphere of a total impression from the top of St. Paul's church; and how rapid and continuous the series of such total impressions. If therefore we suppose the absence of all interference of



the will, reason, and judgement, one or other of two consequences must result. Either the ideas (or relicts of such impression) will exactly imitate the order of the impression itself, which would be absolute *delirium*: or any one part of that impression might recal any other part, and (as from the law of continuity, there must exist in every total impression some one or more parts, which are components of some other following total impression, and so on ad infinitum) *any* part of *any* impression might recal *any* part of any *other*, without a cause present to determine *what* it should be. For to bring in the will, or reason, as causes of their own cause, that is, as at once causes and effects, can satisfy those only who in their pretended evidences of a God having first demanded organization, as the sole cause and ground of intellect, will then coolly demand the pre-existence of intellect, as the cause and ground-work of organization. There is in truth but one state to which this theory applies at all, namely, that of complete light-headedness; and even to this it applies but partially, because the will, and reason are perhaps never wholly suspended.

A case of this kind occurred in a Catholic town in Germany a year or two before my arrival at Göttingen, and had not then ceased to be a frequent subject of conversation. A young woman of four or five and twenty, who



could neither read, nor write, was seized with a nervous fever ; during which, according to the asseverations of all the priests and monks of the neighbourhood, she became *possessed*, and, as it appeared, by a very learned devil. She continued incessantly talking Latin, Greek, and Hebrew, in very pompous tones and with most distinct enunciation. This possession was rendered more probable by the known fact, that she was or had been an heretic. Voltaire humourously advises the devil to decline all acquaintance with medical men ; and it would have been more to his reputation, if he had taken this advice in the present instance. The case had attracted the particular attention of a young physician, and by his statement many eminent physiologists and psychologists visited the town, and cross-examined the case on the spot. Sheets full of her ravings were taken down from her own mouth, and were found to consist of sentences, coherent and intelligible each for itself, but with little or no connection with each other. Of the Hebrew, a small portion only could be traced to the Bible ; the remainder seemed to be in the rabinical dialect. All trick or conspiracy was out of the question. Not only had the young woman ever been an harmless, simple creature ; but she was evidently labouring under a nervous fever. In the town, in which she had been resident for many years



as a servant in different families, no solution presented itself. The young physician, however, determined to trace her past life step by step ; for the patient herself was incapable of returning a rational answer. He at length succeeded in discovering the place, where her parents had lived : travelled thither, found *them* dead, but an uncle surviving ; and from him learnt, that the patient had been charitably taken by an old protestant pastor at nine years old, and had remained with him some years, even till the old man's death. Of this pastor the uncle knew nothing, but that he was a very good man. With great difficulty, and after much search, our young medical philosopher discovered a niece of the pastor's, who had lived with him as his house-keeper, and had inherited his effects. She remembered the girl ; related, that her venerable uncle had been too indulgent, and could not bear to hear the girl scolded ; that she was willing to have kept her, but that after her patron's death, the girl herself refused to stay. Anxious enquiries were then, of course, made concerning the pastor's habits ; and the solution of the phenomenon was soon obtained. For it appeared, that it had been the old man's custom, for years, to walk up and down a passage of his house into which the kitchen door opened, and to read to himself with a loud voice, out of his favorite



books. A considerable number of these were still in the niece's possession. She added, that he was a very learned man and a great Hebraist. Among the books were found a collection of rabbinical writings, together with several of the Greek and Latin fathers; and the physician succeeded in identifying so many passages with those taken down at the young woman's bedside, that no doubt could remain in any rational mind concerning the true origin of the impressions made on her nervous system.

This authenticated case furnishes both proof and instance, that reliques of sensation may exist for an indefinite time in a latent state, in the very same order in which they were originally impressed; and as we cannot rationally suppose the feverish state of the brain to act in any other way than as a stimulus, this fact (and it would not be difficult to adduce several of the same kind) contributes to make it even probable, that all thoughts are in themselves imperishable; and, that if the intelligent faculty should be rendered more comprehensive, it would require only a different and apportioned organization, *the body celestial* instead of *the body terrestrial*, to bring before every human soul the collective experience of its whole past existence. And this, this, perchance, is the dread book of judgement, in whose mysterious hieroglyphics every idle word is re-



corded ! Yea, in the very nature of a living spirit, it may be more possible that heaven and earth should pass away, than that a single act, a single thought, should be loosened or lost from that living chain of causes, to all whose links, conscious or unconscious, the free-will, our only absolute *self*, is co-extensive and co-present. But not now dare I longer discourse of this, waiting for a loftier mood, and a nobler subject, warned from within and from without, that it is profanation to speak of these mysteries\*

τοῖς μηδέποτε φαντασθεῖσιν, ὡς καλὸν τὸ τῆς δικαιοσύνης καὶ σωφροσύνης πρόσωπον, καὶ ὡς ἔτε ἔσπερος ἔτε ἔως ἔτω καλὰ. Τὸν γὰρ ὁρῶντα πρὸς τὸ ὁρώμενον συγγενὲς καὶ ὁμοῖον ποιησάμενον δεῖ ἐπιβάλλειν τῇ ἐα' οὐ γὰρ ἂν πάποτε εἶδεν Ὁφθαλμος Ἡλίου ἡλιοείδης μὴ γεγενήμενος, ἔδε το Καλὸν ἂν ἴδῃ Ψύχῃ μὴ κάλῃ γενομένη.

PLOTINUS.

\* "To those to whose imagination it has never been presented, how beautiful is the countenance of justice and wisdom ; and that neither the morning nor the evening star are so fair. For in order to direct the view aright, it behoves that the beholder should have made himself congenerous and similar to the object beheld. Never could the eye have beheld the sun, had not its own essence been soliform," (*i. e. pre-configured to light by a similarity of essence with that of light*) "neither can a soul not beautiful attain to an intuition of beauty."



## CHAPTER VII.

*Of the necessary consequences of the Hartleian theory—Of the original mistake or equivocation which procured admission for the theory—Memoria Technica.*

We will pass by the utter incompatibility of such a law (if law it may be called, which would itself be the slave of chances) with even that *appearance* of rationality forced upon us by the outward phænomena of human conduct, abstracted from our own consciousness. We will agree to forget this for the moment, in order to fix our attention on that subordination of final to efficient causes in the human being, which flows of necessity from the assumption, that the will, and with the will all acts of thought and attention, are parts and products of this blind mechanism, instead of being distinct powers, whose function it is to controul, determine, and modify the phantasma chaos of association. The soul becomes a mere ens logicum; for as a real separable being, it would be more worthless and ludicrous, than the Grimalkins in the Cat-harpsichord, described in the Spectator. For these did form a part of the process; but in Hartley's scheme the soul is present only to be pinched or *stroked*, while the very squeals



or purring are produced by an agency wholly independent and alien. It involves all the difficulties, all the incomprehensibility (if it be not indeed, ὡς ἐμοί γε δοκεῖ, the absurdity) of intercommunion between substances that have no one property in common, without any of the convenient consequences that bribed the judgment to the admission of the *dualistic* hypothesis. Accordingly, this caput mortuum of the Hartleian process has been rejected by his followers, and the consciousness considered as a *result*, as a *tune*, the common product of the breeze and the harp : tho' this again is the mere remotion of one absurdity to make way for another, equally preposterous. For what is harmony but a mode of relation, the very *esse* of which is *percipi*? An ens rationale, which pre-supposes the power, that by perceiving creates it? The razor's edge becomes a saw to the armed vision ; and the delicious melodies of Purcell or Cimarosa might be disjointed stammerings to a hearer, whose partition of time should be a thousand times subtler than ours. But this obstacle too let us imagine ourselves to have surmounted, and "at one bound high overleap all bound !" Yet according to this hypothesis the disquisition, to which I am at present soliciting the reader's attention, may be as truly said to be written by Saint Paul's church, as by *me* : for it is the mere motion of



my muscles and nerves ; and these again are set in motion from external causes equally passive, which external causes stand themselves in interdependent connection with every thing that exists or has existed. Thus the whole universe co-operates to produce the minutest stroke of every letter, save only that I myself, and I alone, have nothing to do with it, but merely the causeless and *effectless* beholding of it when it is done. Yet scarcely can it be called a beholding ; for it is neither an act nor an effect ; but an impossible creation of a *something-nothing* out of its very contrary ! It is the mere quick-silver plating behind a looking-glass ; and in this alone consists the poor worthless I ! The sum total of my moral and intellectual intercourse dissolved into its elements are reduced to *extension, motion, degrees of velocity*, and those diminished *copies* of configurative motion, which form what we call notions, and notions of notions. Of such philosophy well might Butler say—

“ The metaphysics but a puppet motion  
 That goes with screws, the notion of a notion ;  
 The copy of a copy and lame draught  
 Unnaturally taken from a thought :  
 That counterfeits all pantomimic tricks,  
 And turns the eyes, like an old crucifix ;  
 That counterchanges whatsoe’er it calls  
 B’ another name, and makes it true or false ;  
 Turns truth to falsehood, falsehood into truth,  
 By virtue of the Babylonian’s tooth.”

MISCELLANEOUS THOUGHTS.



The inventor of the watch did not in reality invent it; he only look'd on, while the blind causes, the only true artists, were unfolding themselves. So must it have been too with my friend ALLSTON, when he sketched his picture of the dead man revived by the bones of the prophet Elijah. So must it have been with Mr. SOUTHEY and LORD BYRON, when the one *fancied* himself composing his "RODERICK," and the other his "CHILD HAROLD." The same must hold good of all systems of philosophy; of all arts, governments, wars by sea and by land; in short, of all things that ever have been or that ever will be produced. For according to this system it is not the affections and passions that are at work, in as far as they are *sensations* or *thoughts*. We only *fancy*, that we act from rational resolves, or prudent motives, or from impulses of anger, love, or generosity. In all these cases the real agent is a *something-nothing-every-thing*, which does all of which we know, and knows nothing of all that itself does.

The existence of an infinite spirit, of an intelligent and holy will, must on this system be mere articulated motions of the air. For as the function of the human understanding is no other than merely (to appear to itself) to combine and to apply the phænomena of the association; and as these derive all their reality from the



primary sensations ; and the sensations again all *their* reality from the impressions ab extra ; a God not visible, audible, or tangible, can exist only in the sounds and letters that form his name and attributes. If in *ourselves* there be no such faculties as those of the will, and the scientific reason, we must either have an *innate* idea of them, which would overthrow the whole system ; or we can have no idea at all. The process, by which Hume degraded the notion of cause and effect into a blind product of delusion and habit, into the mere sensation of *proceeding* life (*nisus vitalis*) associated with the images of the memory ; this same process must be repeated to the equal degradation of every *fundamental* idea in ethics or theology.

Far, very far am I from burthening with the odium of these consequences the moral characters of those who first formed, or have since adopted the system ! It is most noticeable of the excellent and pious Hartley, that in the proofs of the existence and attributes of God, with which his second volume commences, he makes no reference to the principles or results of the first. Nay, he assumes, as his foundations, ideas which, if we embrace the doctrines of his first volume, can exist no where but in the vibrations of the ethereal medium common to the nerves and to the atmosphere. Indeed the whole of the second volume is, with the fewest



possible exceptions, independent of his peculiar system. So true is it, that the faith, which saves and sanctifies, is a collective energy, a total act of the whole moral being ; that its living sensorium is in the *heart* ; and that no errors of the understanding can be morally arraigned unless they have proceeded from the heart.— But whether they be such, no man can be certain in the case of another, scarcely perhaps even in his own. Hence it follows by inevitable consequence, that man may perchance determine, *what* is an heresy ; but God only can know, *who* is a heretic. It does not, however, by any means follow, that opinions fundamentally false are harmless. An hundred causes may co-exist to form one complex antidote. Yet the sting of the adder remains venemous, though there are many who have taken up the evil thing ; and it hurted them not ! Some indeed there seem to have been, in an unfortunate neighbour-nation at least, who have embraced this system with a full view of all its moral and religious consequences ; some—

“ ——— who deem themselves most free,  
 When they within this gross and visible sphere  
 Chain down the winged thought, scoffing assent,  
 Proud in their meanness ; and themselves they cheat  
 With noisy emptiness of learned phrase,  
 Their subtle fluids, impacts, essences,  
 Self-working tools, uncaus'd effects, and all  
 Those blind omniscients, those Almighty slaves,  
 Untenanting Creation of its God !”



Such men need discipline, not argument ; they must be made better men, before they can become wiser.

The attention will be more profitably employed in attempting to discover and expose the paralogisms, by the magic of which such a faith could find admission into minds framed for a nobler creed. These, it appears to me, may be all reduced to one sophism as their common genus ; the mistaking the *conditions* of a thing for its *causes* and *essence* ; and the process by which we arrive at the knowledge of a faculty, for the faculty itself. The air I breathe, is the *condition* of my life, not its cause. We could never have learnt that we had eyes but by the process of seeing ; yet having seen we know that the eyes must have pre-existed in order to render the process of sight possible. Let us cross-examine Hartley's scheme under the guidance of this distinction ; and we shall discover, that contemporaneity (Leibnitz's *Lex Continui*) is the *limit and condition* of the laws of mind, itself being rather a law of matter, at least of phænomena considered as material. At the utmost, it is to *thought* the same, as the law of gravitation is to loco-motion. In every voluntary movement we first counteract gravitation, in order to avail ourselves of it. It must exist, that there may be a something to be counteracted, and which by its re-action, aids the



force that is exerted to resist it. Let us consider, what we do when we leap. We first resist the gravitating power by an act purely voluntary, and then by another act, voluntary in part, we yield to it in order to light on the spot, which we had previously proposed to ourselves. Now let a man watch his mind while he is composing ; or, to take a still more common case, while he is trying to recollect a name ; and he will find the process completely analogous. Most of my readers will have observed a small water-insect on the surface of rivulets, which throws a cinque-spotted shadow fringed with prismatic colours on the sunny bottom of the brook ; and will have noticed, how the little animal *wins* its way up against the stream, by alternate pulses of active and passive motion, now resisting the current, and now yielding to it in order to gather strength and a momentary *fulcrum* for a further propulsion. This is no unapt emblem of the mind's self-experience in the act of thinking. There are evidently two powers at work, which relatively to each other are active and passive ; and this is not possible without an intermediate faculty, which is at once both active and passive. (In philosophical language, we must denominate this intermediate faculty in all its degrees and determinations, the IMAGINATION. But in common language, and especially on the subject of poetry,



we appropriate the name to a superior degree of the faculty, joined to a superior voluntary controul over it.)

Contemporaneity then, being the common condition of all the laws of association, and a component element in all the *materia subjecta*, the parts of which are to be associated, must needs be co-present with all. Nothing, therefore, can be more easy than to pass off on an incautious mind this constant companion of each, for the essential substance of all. But if we appeal to our own consciousness, we shall find that even *time* itself, as the *cause* of a *particular* act of association, is distinct from contemporaneity, as the *condition* of *all* association. Seeing a mackarel it may happen, that I immediately think of gooseberries, because I at the same time ate mackarel with gooseberries as the sauce. The first syllable of the latter word, being that which had co-existed with the image of the bird so called, I may then think of a goose. In the next moment the image of a swan may arise before me, though I had never seen the two birds together. In the two former instances, I am conscious that their co-existence in *time* was the circumstance, that enabled me to recollect them; and equally conscious am I, that the latter was recalled to me by the joint operation of likeness and contrast. So it is with *cause* and *effect*; so too



with *order*. So am I able to distinguish whether it was proximity in time, or continuity in space, that occasioned me to recall B. on the mention of A. They cannot be indeed *separated* from contemporaneity; for that would be to separate them from the mind itself. The act of consciousness is indeed identical with *time* considered in its essence. (I mean *time* per se, as contra-distinguished from our *notion* of time; for this is always blended with the idea of space, which as the *contrary* of time, is therefore its *measure*.) Nevertheless the accident of seeing two objects at the same moment acts, as a distinguishable cause from that of having seen them in the same place: and the true practical general law of association is this; that whatever makes certain parts of a total impression more vivid or distinct than the rest, will determine the mind to recall these in preference to others equally linked together by the common condition of contemporaneity, or (what I deem a more appropriate and philosophical term) of *continuity*. But the will itself by confining and intensifying\* the attention may arbitrarily give

\* I am aware, that this word occurs neither in Johnson's Dictionary or in any classical writer. But the word, "*to intend*," which Newton and others before him employ in this sense, is now so completely appropriated to another meaning, that I could not use it without ambiguity: while to paraphrase the sense, as by *render intense*, would often break up the sentence and destroy that harmony of the position of the words with the logical position of the thoughts, which is



vividness or distinctness to any object whatsoever; and from hence we may deduce the uselessness if not the absurdity of certain recent schemes which *promise* an artificial *memory*, but which in reality can only produce a confusion and debasement of the *fancy*. Sound logic, as the habitual subordination of the individual to the species, and of the species to the genus; philosophical knowledge of facts under the relation of cause and effect; a chearful and communicative temper that disposes us to notice the similarities and contrasts of things, that we may be able to illustrate the one by the other; a quiet conscience; a condition free from anxieties; sound health, and above all (as far as relates to passive remembrance) a healthy digestion; *these* are the best, these are the only **ARTS OF MEMORY.**

a beauty in all composition, and more especially desirable in a close philosophical investigation. I have therefore hazarded the word, *intensify*; though, I confess, it sounds uncouth to my own ear.



## CHAPTER VIII.

*The system of DUALISM introduced by Des Cartes—Refined first by Spinoza and afterwards by Leibnitz into the doctrine of Harmonia præstabilita—Hylozoism—Materialism—Neither of these systems on any possible theory of association, supplies or supersedes a theory of perception, or explains the formation of the associable.*

To the best of my knowledge Des Cartes was the first philosopher, who introduced the absolute and essential heterogeneity of the soul as intelligence, and the body as matter. The assumption, and the form of speaking, have remained, though the denial of all other properties to matter but that of extension, on which denial the whole system of dualism is grounded, has been long exploded. For since impenetrability is intelligible only as a mode of resistance; its admission places the essence of *matter* in an act or power, which it possesses in common with *spirit*; and body and spirit are therefore no longer absolutely heterogeneous, but *may* without any *absurdity* be supposed to be different modes, or degrees in perfection, of a



common substratum. To this possibility, however, it was not the fashion to advert. The soul was a *thinking* substance; and body a *space-filling* substance. Yet the apparent action of each on the other pressed heavy on the philosopher on the one hand; and no less heavily on the other hand pressed the evident truth, that the law of causality holds only between homogeneous things, i. e. things having some common property; and cannot extend from one world into another, its opposite. A close analysis evinced it to be no less absurd, than the question whether a man's affection for his wife, lay North-east, or South-west of the love he bore towards his child? Leibnitz's doctrine of a pre-established harmony, which he certainly borrowed from Spinoza, who had himself taken the hint from Des Cartes's animal machines, was in its *common* interpretation too strange to survive the inventor—too repugnant to our *common sense* (which is not indeed entitled to a judicial voice in the courts of scientific philosophy; but whose whispers still exert a strong secret influence.) Even Wolf the admirer, and illustrious systematizer of the Leibnitzian doctrine, contents himself with defending the possibility of the idea, but does not adopt it as a part of the edifice.

The hypothesis of Hylozoism on the other side, is the death of all rational physiology, and



indeed of all physical science; for that requires a limitation of terms, and cannot consist with the arbitrary power of multiplying attributes by occult qualities. Besides, it answers no purpose; unless indeed a difficulty can be solved by multiplying it, or that we can acquire a clearer notion of our soul, by being told that we have a million souls, and that every atom of our bodies has a soul of its own. Far more prudent is it to admit the difficulty once for all, and then let it lie at rest. There is a sediment indeed at the bottom of the vessel, but all the water above it is clear and transparent. The Hylozoist only shakes it up, and renders the whole turbid.

But it is not either the nature of man, or the duty of the philosopher to despair concerning any important problem until, as in the squaring of the circle, the impossibility of a solution has been demonstrated. How the *esse* assumed as originally distinct from the *scire*, can ever unite itself with it; how *being* can transform itself into a *knowing*, becomes conceivable on one only condition; namely, if it can be shown that the *vis representativa*, or the Sentient, is itself a species of being; i. e. either as a property or attribute, or as an hypostasis or self subsistence. The former is indeed the assumption of materialism; a system which could not but be patronized by the philosopher, if only it actually performed what it promises. But how any



affection from without can metamorphose itself into perception or will ; the materialist has hitherto left, not only as incomprehensible as he found it, but has aggravated it into a comprehensible absurdity. For, grant that an object from without could act upon the conscious *self*, as on a consubstantial object ; yet such an affection could only engender something homogeneous with itself. Motion could only propagate motion. Matter has no *Inward*. We remove one surface, but to meet with another. We can but divide a particle into particles ; and each atom comprehends in itself the properties of the material universe. Let any reflecting mind make the experiment of explaining to itself the evidence of our sensuous intuitions, from the hypothesis that in any given perception there is a something which has been communicated to it by an impact or an impression *ab extra*. In the first place, by the impact on the perceptive or ens representans not the object itself, but only its action or effect, will pass into the same. Not the iron tongue, but its vibrations, pass into the metal of the bell. Now in our immediate perception, it is not the mere power or act of the object, but the object itself, which is immediately present. We might indeed attempt to explain this result by a chain of *deductions* and *conclusions* ; but that, first, the very faculty of deducing and concluding



would equally demand an explanation ; and second'y, that there exists in fact no such intermediation by logical notions, such as those of cause and effect. It is the object itself, not the product of a syllogism, which is present to our consciousness. Or would we explain this supervention of the object to the sensation, by a productive faculty set in motion by an impulse ; still the transition, into the perceptive, of the object itself, from which the impulse proceeded, assumes a power that can permeate and wholly possess the soul,

“ And like a God by spiritual art,  
Be all in all, and all in every part.”

COWLEY.

And how came the *perceptive* here ? And what is become of the wonder-promising MATTER, that was to perform all these marvels by force of mere figure, weight, and motion ? The most consistent proceeding of the dogmatic materialist is to fall back into the common rank of *soul-and-bodyists* ; to affect the mysterious, and declare the whole process a revelation *given*, and not to be *understood*, which it would be prophane to examine too closely. *Datur non intelligitur*. But a revelation unconfirmed by miracles, and a faith not commanded by the conscience, a philosopher may venture to pass by, without suspecting himself of any irreligious tendency.



Thus as materialism has been generally taught, it is utterly unintelligible, and owes all its proselytes to the propensity so common among men, to mistake distinct images for clear conceptions; and vice versa, to reject as inconceivable whatever from its own nature is unimaginable. But as soon as it becomes intelligible, it ceases to be materialism. In order to explain *thinking*, as a material phænomenon, it is necessary to refine matter into a mere modification of intelligence, with the two-fold function of *appearing* and *perceiving*. Even so did Priestley in his controversy with Price! He stript matter of all its material properties; substituted spiritual powers; and when we expected to find a body, behold! we had nothing but its ghost! the *apparition* of a defunct substance!

I shall not dilate further on this subject; because it will (if God grant health and permission) be treated of at large and systematically in a work, which I have many years been preparing, on the PRODUCTIVE LOGOS human and divine; with, and as the introduction to, a full commentary on the Gospel of St. John. To make myself intelligible as far as my present subject requires, it will be sufficient briefly to observe—1. That all association demands and presupposes the existence of the thoughts and images to be associated.—2. The hypothe-



sis of an external world exactly correspondent to those images or modifications of our own being, which alone (according to this system) we actually behold, is as thorough idealism as Berkeley's, inasmuch as it equally (perhaps, in a more perfect degree) removes all reality and immediateness of perception, and places us in a dream-world of phantoms and spectres, the inexplicable swarm and equivocal generation of motions in our own brains.—3. That this hypothesis neither involves the explanation, nor precludes the necessity, of a mechanism and co-adequate forces in the perceiver, which at the more than magic touch of the impulse from without is to create anew for itself the correspondent object. The formation of a copy is not solved by the mere pre-existence of an original; the copyist of Raphael's Transfiguration must repeat more or less perfectly the process of Raphael. It would be easy to explain a thought from the image on the retina, and that from the geometry of light, if this very light did not present the very same difficulty. We might as rationally chant the Brahmin creed of the tortoise that supported the bear, that supported the elephant, that supported the world, to the tune of "This is the house that Jack built." The *sic Deo placitum est* we all admit as the sufficient cause, and the divine goodness as the sufficient reason; but an answer to the whence?



and why? is no answer to the how? which alone is the physiologist's concern. It is a mere sophisma pigrum, and (as Bacon hath said) the arrogance of pusillanimity, which lifts up the idol of a mortal's fancy and commands us to fall down and worship it, as a work of divine wisdom, an ancile or palladium fallen from heaven. By the very same argument the supporters of the Ptolemaic system might have rebuffed the Newtonian, and pointing to the sky with self-complacent\* grin have appealed to *common sense*, whether the sun did not move and the earth stand still.

\* "And Coxcombs vanquish Berkeley with a grin." *Pope*.



## CHAPTER IX.

*Is philosophy possible as a science, and what are its conditions?—Giordano Bruno—Literary aristocracy, or the existence of a tacit compact among the learned as a privileged order—The author's obligations to the Mystics;—to Emanuel Kant—The difference between the letter and the spirit of Kant's writings, and a vindication of prudence in the teaching of philosophy—Fichte's attempt to complete the critical system—Its partial success and ultimate failure—Obligations to Schelling; and among English writers to Saumarez.*

After I had successively studied in the schools of Locke, Berkeley, Leibnitz, and Hartley, and could find in neither of them an abiding place for my reason, I began to ask myself; is a system of philosophy, as different from mere history and historic classification possible? If possible, what are its necessary conditions? I was for a while disposed to answer the first question in the negative, and to admit that the sole practicable employment for the human mind was to observe, to collect, and to classify. But I soon felt, that human nature itself fought



up against this wilful resignation of intellect; and as soon did I find, that the scheme taken with all its consequences and cleared of all inconsistencies was not less impracticable, than contra-natural. Assume in its full extent the position, *nihil in intellectu quod non prius in sensa*, without Leibnitz's qualifying *præter ipsum intellectum*, and in the same sense, in which it was understood by Hartley and Condilliac: and what Hume had demonstratively deduced from this concession concerning cause and effect, will apply with equal and crushing force to all the\* other eleven categorical forms, and the logical functions corresponding to them. How can we make bricks without straw? Or build without cement? We learn all things indeed by *occasion* of experience; but the very facts so learnt force us inward on the antecedents, that must be pre-supposed in order to render experience itself possible. The first book of Locke's Essays (if the supposed error, which it labours to subvert, be not a mere thing of straw, an absurdity which, no man ever did, or indeed ever could believe) is formed on a Σόφισμα Ετεροζητησέως, and involves the old mistake of *cum hoc: ergo, propter hoc*.

\* Videlicet; quantity, quality, relation, and mode, each consisting of three subdivisions. Vide Kritik der reinen Vernunft, p. 95, and 106. See too the judicious remarks in Locke and Hume.



The term, Philosophy, defines itself as an affectionate seeking after the truth; but Truth is the correlative of Being. This again is no way conceivable, but by assuming as a postulate, that both are ab initio, identical and co-inherent; that intelligence and being are reciprocally each others Substrate. I presumed that this was a possible conception (*i. e.* that it involved no logical inconsonance) from the length of time during which the scholastic definition of the *Supreme Being*, as *actus purissimus sine ullâ potentialitate*, was received in the schools of Theology, both by the Pontifician and the Reformed divines. The early study of Plato and Plotinus, with the commentaries and the *THEOLOGIA PLATONICA*, of the illustrious Florentine; of Proclus, and Gemistius Pletho; and at a later period of the “*De Immenso et Innumerabili*,” and the “*De la causa, principio et uno*,” of the philosopher of Nola, who could boast of a Sir Philip Sidney, and Fulke Greville among his patrons, and whom the idolaters of Rome burnt as an atheist in the year 1660; had all contributed to prepare my mind for the reception and welcoming of the *Cogito quia sum, et sum quia Cogito*; a philosophy of seeming hardihood, but certainly the most ancient, and therefore presumptively the most natural.

Why need I be afraid? Say rather how dare



I be ashamed of the Teutonic theosophist, Jacob Behmen? Many indeed, and gross were his delusions; and such as furnish frequent and ample occasion for the triumph of the learned over the poor ignorant *shoemaker*, who had dared think for himself. But while we remember that these delusions were such, as might be anticipated from his utter want of all intellectual discipline, and from his ignorance of rational psychology, let it not be forgotten that the latter defect he had in common with the most learned theologians of his age. Neither with books, nor with book-learned men was he conversant. A meek and shy quietist, his intellectual powers were never stimulated into fev'rous energy by crowds of proselytes, or by the ambition of proselyting. JACOB BEHMEN was an enthusiast, in the strictest sense, as not merely distinguished, but as contra-distinguished, from a fanatic. While I in part translate the following observations from a contemporary writer of the Continent, let me be permitted to premise, that I might have transcribed the substance from memoranda of my own, which were written many years before his pamphlet was given to the world; and that I prefer another's words to my own, partly as a tribute due to priority of publication; but still more from the pleasure of sympathy in a case where *coincidence* only was possible.



Whoever is acquainted with the history of philosophy, during the two or three last centuries, cannot but admit, that there appears to have existed a sort of secret and tacit compact among the learned, not to pass beyond a certain limit in speculative science. The privilege of free thought, so highly extolled, has at no time been held valid in actual practice, except within this limit; and not a single stride beyond it has ever been ventured without bringing obloquy on the transgressor. The few men of genius among the learned class, who actually did overstep this boundary, anxiously avoided the appearance of having so done. Therefore the true depth of science, and the penetration to the inmost centre, from which all the lines of knowledge diverge to their ever distant circumference, was abandoned to the illiterate and the simple, whom unstilled yearning, and an original ebulliency of spirit, had urged to the investigation of the indwelling and living ground of all things. These then, because their names had never been inrolled in the guilds of the learned, were persecuted by the registered livery-men as interlopers on their rights and priviledges. All without distinction were branded as fanatics and phantasts; not only those, whose wild and exorbitant imaginations had actually engendered only extravagant and grotesque phantasms, and whose



productions were, for the most part, poor copies and gross caricatures of genuine inspiration; but the truly inspired likewise, the originals themselves! And this for no other reason, but because they were the *unlearned*, men of humble and obscure occupations. When, and from whom among the literati by profession, have we ever heard the divine doxology repeated, “I thank thee O father! Lord of Heaven and Earth! because thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes.” No! the haughty priests of learning, not only banished from the schools and marts of science all, who had dared draw living waters from the *fountain*, but drove them out of the very temple, which mean time “*the buyers, and sellers, and money-changers*” were suffered to make “*a den of thieves.*”

And yet it would not be easy to discover any substantial ground for this contemptuous pride in those literati, who have most distinguished themselves by their scorn of BEHMEN, DE THOYRAS, GEORGE FOX, &c.; unless it be, that *they* could write orthographically, make smooth periods, and had the fashions of authorship almost literally *at their fingers ends*, while the latter, in simplicity of soul, made their words immediate echoes of their feelings. Hence the frequency of those phrases among



them, which have been mistaken for pretences to immediate inspiration; as for instance, "*it was delivered unto me,*" "*I strove not to speak,*" "*I said, I will be silent,*" "*but the word was in heart as a burning fire,*" "*and I could not forbear.*" Hence too the unwillingness to give offence; hence the foresight, and the dread of the clamours, which would be raised against them, so frequently avowed in the writings of these men, and expressed, as was natural, in the words of the only book, with which they were familiar. "Woe is me that I am become a man of strife, and a man of contention,—I love peace: the souls of men are dear unto me: yet because I seek for Light every one of them doth curse me!" O! it requires deeper feeling, and a stronger imagination, than belong to most of those, to whom reasoning and fluent expression have been as a trade learnt in boyhood, to conceive with what *might*, with what inward *strivings* and *commotion*, the perception of a new and vital TRUTH takes possession of an uneducated man of genius. His meditations are almost inevitably employed on the eternal, or the everlasting; for "*the world is not his friend, nor the world's law.*" Need we then be surprised, that under an excitement at once so strong and so unusual, the man's body should sympathize with the struggles of his mind; or that he should at times be so far



deluded, as to mistake the tumultuous sensations of his nerves, and the co-existing spectres of his fancy, as parts or symbols of the truths which were opening on him? It has indeed been plausibly observed, that in order to derive any advantage, or to collect any intelligible meaning, from the writings of these ignorant mystics, the reader must bring with him a spirit and judgement superior to that of the writers themselves:

“And what he brings, what needs he elsewhere seek?”

PARADISE REGAINED.

—A sophism, which I fully agree with Warburton, is unworthy of Milton; how much more so of the awful person, in whose mouth he has placed it? One assertion I will venture to make, as suggested by my own experience, that there exist folios on the human understanding, and the nature of man, which would have a far juster claim to their high rank and celebrity, if in the whole huge volume there could be found as much fulness of heart and intellect, as burst forth in many a simple page of GEORGE FOX, JACOB BEHMEN, and even of Behmen's commentator, the pious and fervid WILLIAM LAW.

The feeling of gratitude, which I cherish towards these men, has caused me to digress further than I had foreseen or proposed; but to have passed them over in an historical sketch



of my literary life and opinions, would have seemed to me like the denial of a debt, the concealment of a boon. For the writings of these mystics acted in no slight degree to prevent my mind from being imprisoned within the outline of any single dogmatic system. They contributed to keep alive the *heart* in the *head*; gave me an indistinct, yet stirring and working presentment, that all the products of the mere *reflective* faculty partook of DEATH, and were as the rattling twigs and sprays in winter, into which a sap was yet to be propelled, from some root to which I had not penetrated, if they were to afford my soul either food or shelter. If they were too often a moving cloud of smoke to me by day, yet they were always a pillar of fire throughout the night, during my wanderings through the wilderness of doubt, and enabled me to skirt, without crossing, the sandy deserts of utter unbelief. That the system is capable of being converted into an irreligious PANTHEISM, I well know. The ETHICS of SPINOZA, may, or may not, be an instance. But at no time could I believe, that *in itself* and *essentially* it is incompatible with religion, natural, or revealed: and now I am most thoroughly persuaded of the contrary. The writings of the illustrious sage of Königsberg, the founder of the Critical Philosophy, more than any other work, at once invigorated



and disciplined my understanding. The originality, the depth, and the compression of the thoughts; the novelty and subtlety, yet solidity and importance, of the distinctions; the adamant chain of the logic; and I will venture to add (paradox as it will appear to those who have taken their notion of IMMANUEL KANT, from Reviewers and Frenchmen) the *clearness* and *evidence*, of the "CRITIQUE OF THE PURE REASON;" of the JUDGMENT; of the "METAPHYSICAL ELEMENTS OF NATURAL PHILOSOPHY," and of his "RELIGION WITHIN THE BOUNDS OF PURE REASON," took possession of me as with a giant's hand. After fifteen years familiarity with them, I still read these and all his other productions with undiminished delight and increasing admiration. The few passages that remained obscure to me, after due efforts of thought, (as the chapter on *original apperception*,) and the apparent contradictions which occur, I soon found were hints and insinuations referring to ideas, which KANT either did not think it prudent to avow, or which he considered as consistently *left behind* in a pure analysis, not of human nature in toto, but of the speculative intellect alone. Here therefore he was constrained to commence at the point of *reflection*, or natural consciousness: while in his *moral* system he was permitted to assume a higher ground (the autonomy of the will) as



a POSTULATE deducible from the unconditional command, or (in the technical language of his school) the categorical imperative, of the conscience. He had been in imminent danger of persecution during the reign of the late king of Prussia, that strange compound of lawless debauchery, and priest-ridden superstition: and it is probable that he had little inclination, in his old age, to act over again the fortunes, and hair-breadth escapes of Wolf. The expulsion of the first among Kant's disciples, who attempted to complete his system, from the university of Jena, with the confiscation and prohibition of the obnoxious work by the joint efforts of the courts of Saxony and Hanover, supplied experimental proof, that the venerable old man's caution was not groundless. In spite therefore of his own declarations, I could never believe, it was possible for him to have meant no more by his *Noumenon*, or THING IN ITSELF, than his mere words express; or that in his own conception he confined the whole *plastic* power to the forms of the intellect, leaving for the external cause, for the *materiale* of our sensations, a matter without form, which is doubtless inconceivable. I entertained doubts likewise, whether in his own mind, he even laid *all* the stress, which he appears to do on the moral postulates.

AN IDEA, in the *highest* sense of that word,



cannot be conveyed but by a *symbol*; and, except in geometry, all symbols of necessity involve an apparent contradiction. Φώνησε Συνέτοισεν: and for those who could not pierce through this symbolic husk, his writings were not intended. Questions which can not be fully answered without exposing the respondent to personal danger, are not entitled to a fair answer; and yet to say this openly, would in many cases furnish the very advantage, which the adversary is insidiously seeking after. Veracity does not consist in *saying*, but in the intention of *communicating* truth; and the philosopher who can not utter the whole truth without conveying falsehood, and at the same time, perhaps, exciting the most malignant passions, is constrained to express himself either *mythically* or equivocally. When Kant therefore was importuned to settle the disputes of his commentators himself, by declaring what he meant, how could he decline the honours of martyrdom with less offence, than by simply replying, “ I meant what I said, and at the age of near four score, I have something else, and more important to do, than to write a commentary on my own works.”

FICHTE's Wissenschaftslehre, or *Lore* of Ultimate Science, was to add the key-stone of the arch: and by commencing with an *act*, instead of a *thing* or *substance*, Fichte assuredly gave



the first mortal blow to Spinozism, as taught by Spinoza himself; and supplied the *idea* of a system truly metaphysical, and of a *metaphysique* truly systematic: (i. e. having its spring and principle within itself.) But this fundamental idea he overbuilt with a heavy mass of mere *notions*, and psychological acts of arbitrary reflection. Thus his theory degenerated into a crude\* egoismus, a boastful and hyperstoic hostility to NATURE, as lifeless, godless, and altogether unholy: while his *religion* consisted in the assumption of a mere ORDO ORDINANS, which we were permitted *exoterice* to call GOD; and his *ethics* in an ascetic, and almost monkish, mortification of the natural passions and desires.

In Schelling's "NATUR-PHILOSOPHIE," and the "SYSTEM DES TRANSCENDENTALEN IDEALISMUS," I first found a genial coincidence with much that I had toiled out for myself, and a powerful assistance in what I had yet to do.

I have introduced this statement, as appropriate to the narrative nature of this sketch; yet rather in reference to the work which I have announced in a preceding page, than to my

\*The following burlesque on the Fichtean Egoismus may, perhaps, be amusing to the few who have studied the system, and to those who are unacquainted with it, may convey as tolerable a likeness of Fichte's idealism as can be expected from an avowed caricature.

The categorical imperative, or the annunciation of the new Teutonic God, ΕΓΩΕΝΚΑΙΠΑΝ: a dithyrambic Ode,



present subject. It would be but a mere act of justice to myself, were I to warn my future readers, that an identity of thought, or even similarity of phrase will not be at all times a certain proof that the passage has been borrowed from Schelling, or that the conceptions were originally learnt from him. In this instance, as

by QUERKOPF VON KLUBSTICK, Grammarian, and Subrector in Gymnasio. \*\*\*\*

Eu! Dei vices gerens, ipse Divus,  
(*Speak English, Friend!*) the God Imperativus,  
Here on this market-cross aloud I cry:

I, I, I! I itself I!

The form and the substance, the what and the why,

The when and the where, and the low and the high,

The inside and outside, the earth and the sky,

I, you, and he, and he, you and I,

All souls and all bodies are I itself I!

All I itself I!

(Fools! a truce with this starting!)

All my I! all my I!

He's a heretic dog who but adds Betty Martin!

Thus cried the God with high imperial tone:

In robe of stiffest state, that scoff'd at beauty,

A pronoun-verb imperative he shone—

Then substantive and plural-singular grown

He thus spake on! Behold in I alone

(For ethics boast a syntax of their own)

Or if in ye, yet as I doth depute ye,

In O! I, you, the vocative of duty!

I of the world's whole Lexicon the root!

Of the whole universe of touch, sound, sight

The genitive and ablative to boot:

The accusative of wrong, the nom'native of right,

And in all cases the case absolute!

Self-construed, I all other moods decline:

Imperative, from nothing we derive us;

Yet as a super-postulate of mine,

Unconstrued antecedence I assign

To X, Y, Z, the God infinitivus!



in the dramatic lectures of Schlegel to which I have before alluded, from the same motive of self-defence against the charge of plagiarism, many of the most striking resemblances, indeed all the main and fundamental ideas, were born and matured in my mind before I had ever seen a single page of the German Philosopher ; and I might indeed affirm with truth, before the more important works of Schelling had been written, or at least made public. Nor is this coincidence at all to be wondered at. We had studied in the same school ; been disciplined by the same preparatory philosophy, namely, the writings of Kaut ; we had both equal obligations to the polar logic and dynamic philosophy of Giordano Bruno ; and Schelling has lately, and, as of recent acquisition, avowed that same affectionate reverence for the labors of Behmen, and other mystics, which I had formed at a much earlier period. The coincidence of SCHELLING'S system with certain general ideas of Behmen, he declares to have been *mere* coincidence ; while *my* obligations have been more direct. *He* needs give to Behmen only feelings of sympathy ; while I owe him a debt of gratitude. God forbid ! that I should be suspected of a wish to enter into a rivalry with SCHELLING for the honors so unequivocally his right, not only as a great and original genius, but as the *founder* of the PHI-



LOSOPHY OF NATURE, and as the most successful *improver* of the Dynamic\* System which, begun by Bruno, was re-introduced (in a more philosophical form, and freed from all its impurities and visionary accompaniments) by KANT; in whom it was the native and necessary growth of his own system. KANT's followers, however, on whom (for the greater part) their master's *cloak* had fallen without, or with a very scanty portion of, his *spirit*, had adopted his dynamic ideas, only as a more refined species of mechanics. With exception of one or two fundamental ideas, which cannot be withheld from FICHTE, to SCHELLING we owe the com-

\* It would be an act of high and almost criminal injustice to pass over in silence the name of Mr. RICHARD SAUMAREZ, a gentleman equally well known as a medical man and as a philanthropist, but who demands notice on the present occasion as the author of "a new System of Physiology" in two volumes octavo, published 1797; and in 1812 of "an Examination of the natural and artificial Systems of Philosophy which now prevail" in one volume octavo, entitled, "The Principles of physiological and physical Science." The latter work is not quite equal to the former in style or arrangement; and there is a greater necessity of distinguishing the principles of the author's philosophy from his conjectures concerning colour, the atmospheric matter, comets, &c. which whether just or erroneous are by no means necessary consequences of that philosophy. Yet even in this department of this volume, which I regard as comparatively the inferior work, the reasonings by which Mr. Saumarez invalidates the immanence of an infinite power in any finite substance are the offspring of no common mind; and the experiment on the expansibility of the air is at least plausible and highly ingenious. But the merit, which will secure both to the book and to the writer a high and honorable name with posterity, consists in the masterly force of reasoning, and the copious-



pletion, and the most important victories, of this revolution in philosophy. To me it will be happiness and honor enough, should I succeed in rendering the system itself intelligible to my countrymen, and in the application of it to the most awful of subjects for the most important of purposes. Whether a work is the offspring of a man's own spirit, and the product of original thinking, will be discovered by those who are its sole legitimate judges, by better tests than the mere reference to dates. For readers in general, let whatever shall be found in this or any future work of mine, that resembles, or coincides with, the doctrines of my German

ness of induction, with which he has assailed, and (in my opinion) subverted the tyranny of the mechanic system in physiology; established not only the existence of final causes, but their necessity and efficiency in every system that merits the name of philosophical; and substituting life and progressive power, for the contradictory *inert force*, has a right to be known and remembered as the first instaurator of the dynamic philosophy in England. The author's views, as far as concerns himself, are unborrowed and compleatly his own, as he neither possessed nor do his writings discover, the least acquaintance with the works of Kant, in which the germs of the philosophy exist; and his volumes were published many years before the full developement of these germs by Schelling. Mr. Saumarez's detection of the Brauronian system was no light or ordinary service at the time; and I scarcely remember in any work on any subject a confutation so thoroughly satisfactory. It is sufficient at this time to have stated the fact; as in the preface to the work, which I have already announced on the Logos, I have exhibited in detail the merits of this writer, and genuine philosopher, who needed only have taken his foundations somewhat deeper and wider to have superseded a considerable part of my labours.



predecessor, though contemporary, be wholly attributed to *him*: provided, that the absence of distinct references to his books, which I could not at all times make with truth as designating citations or thoughts actually *derived* from him; and which, I trust, would, after this general acknowledgment be superfluous; be not charged on me as an ungenerous concealment or intentional plagiarism. I have not indeed (eheu! res angusta domi!) been hitherto able to procure more than two of his books, viz. the 1st volume of his collected Tracts, and his System of Transcendental Idealism; to which, however, I must add a small pamphlet against Fichte, the spirit of which was to *my* feelings painfully incongruous with the principles, and which (with the usual allowance afforded to an antithesis) displayed the love of wisdom rather than the wisdom of love. I regard truth as a divine ventriloquist: I care not from whose mouth the sounds are supposed to proceed, if only the words are audible and intelligible. “Albeit, I must confess to be half in doubt, whether I should bring it forth or no, it being so contrary to the eye of the world, and the world so potent in most men’s hearts, that I shall endanger either not to be regarded or not to be understood.”

MILTON: *Reason of Church Government.*



And to conclude the subject of citation, with a cluster of citations, which as taken from books, not in common use, may contribute to the reader's amusement, as a voluntary before a sermon. "Dolet mihi quidem deliciis literarum inescatos subito jam homines adeo esse, præsertim qui Christianos se profitentur, et legere nisi quod ad delectationem facit, sustineant nihil: unde et disciplinæ severiores et philosophia ipsa jam fere prorsus etiam a doctis negliguntur. Quod quidem propositum studiorum, nisi mature corrigitur, tam magnum rebus incommodum dabit, quàm dedit Barbaries olim. Pertinax res Barbaries est, fateor: sed minus potest tamen, quàm illa molities et *persuasa prudentia* literarum, quæ si *ratione* caret, sapientiæ virtutisque *specie* mortales miserè circumducit. Succedet igitur, ut arbitror, haud ita multo post, pro rusticanâ seculi nostri ruditate captatrix illa *communiloquentia* robur animi virilis omne, omnem virtutem masculam profligatura, nisi cavetur."

SIMON GRYNÆUS, candido lectori, prefixed to the Latin translation of Plato, by Marsilius Ficinus. Lugduni, 1557. A too prophetic remark, which has been in fulfilment from the year 1680, to the present 1815. N. B. By "persuasa prudentia," Grynæus means self-complacent *common sense* as opposed to science and philosophic reason.



“Est medijs ordo et velut equestris Ingeniorum quidem sagacium et rebus humanis commodorum, non tamen in primam magnitudinem patentium. Eorum hominum, ut ita dicam, major annona est. Sedulum esse, nihil temerè loqui, assuescere labori, et imagine prudentiæ & modestiæ tegere angustiores partes captûs dum exercitationem et usum, quo isti in civilibus rebus pollent, pro natura et magnitudine ingenii plerique accipiunt.”

BARCLAI ARGENIS, p. 71.

“As therefore, physicians are many times forced to leave such methods of curing as themselves know to be fittest, and being over-ruled by the sick man’s impatience, are fain to try the best they can: in like sort, considering how the case doth stand with the present age, full of tongue and weak of brain, behold we would (*if our subject permitted it*) yield to the stream thereof. That way we would be contented to prove our thesis, which being the worse in itself, notwithstanding is now by reason of common imbecility the fitter and likelier to be brooked.”—HOOKER.

If this fear could be rationally entertained in the controversial age of Hooker, under the then robust discipline of the scholastic logic, pardonably may a writer of the present times anticipate a scanty audience for abstrusest themes, and truths that can neither be communicated



or received without effort of thought, as well as patience of attention.

“ Che s'io non erro al calcular de' punti,  
Par ch' *Asinina* Stella a noi predomini,  
E'l Somaro e'l castron si sian congiunti.  
Il tempo d'Apuleio piu non si nomini:  
Che se allora un sol Huom sembrava un Asino,  
Mille Asini á miei dì rassembran Huomini!”

Di SALVATOR ROSA Satir. I. l. 10.



## CHAPTER X.

*A chapter of digression and anecdotes, as an interlude preceding that on the nature and genesis of the imagination or plastic power—On pedantry and pedantic expressions—Advice to young authors respecting publication—Various anecdotes of the author's literary life, and the progress of his opinions in religion and politics.*

“*Esemplastic.* The word is not in Johnson, nor have I met with it elsewhere.” Neither have I! I constructed it myself from the Greek words, εἰς ἐν πλαττεῖν i. e. to shape into one; because, having to convey a new sense, I thought that a new term would both aid the recollection of my meaning, and prevent its being confounded with the usual import of the word, imagination. “*But this is pedantry!*” Not necessarily so, I hope. If I am not misinformed, pedantry consists in the use of words unsuitable to the time, place, and company. The language of the market would be in the schools as *pedantic*, though it might not be reprobated by that name, as the language of the schools in the market. The mere man of the



world, who insists that no other terms but such as occur in common conversation should be employed in a scientific disquisition, and with no greater precision, is as truly a *pedant* as the man of letters, who either over-rating the acquirements of his auditors, or misled by his own familiarity with technical or scholastic terms, converses at the wine-table with his mind fixed on his musæum or laboratory; even though the latter pedant instead of desiring his wife to *make the tea*, should bid her add to the quant. suff. of thea sinensis the oxyd of hydrogen saturated with caloric. To use the colloquial (and in truth somewhat *vulgar*) metaphor, if the pedant of the cloyster, and the pedant of the lobby, both *smell equally of the shop*, yet the odour from the Russian binding of good old *authentic-looking* folios and quartos is less annoying than the steams from the tavern or bagnio. Nay, though the pedantry of the scholar should betray a little ostentation, yet a well-conditioned mind would more easily, methinks, tolerate the *fox brush* of learned vanity, than the *sans culotterie* of a contemptuous ignorance, that assumes a merit from mutilation in the self-consoling sneer at the pompous incumbrance of tails.

The first lesson of philosophic discipline is to wean the student's attention from the DEGREES of things, which alone form the



vocabulary of common life, and to direct it to the KIND abstracted from *degree*. Thus the chemical student is taught not to be startled at disquisitions on the heat in ice, or on latent and fixible light. In such discourse the instructor has no other alternative than either to use old words with new meanings (the plan adopted by Darwin in his *Zoonomia*;) or to introduce new terms, after the example of Linnæus, and the framers of the present chemical nomenclature. The latter mode is evidently preferable, were it only that the former demands a twofold exertion of thought in one and the same act. For the reader (or hearer) is required not only to learn and bear in mind the new definition; but to unlearn, and keep out of his view, the old and habitual meaning; a far more difficult and perplexing task, and for which the mere *semblance* of eschewing pedantry seems to me an inadequate compensation. Where, indeed, it is in our power to recall an appropriate term that had without sufficient reason become obsolete, it is doubtless a less evil to restore than to coin anew. Thus to express in one word, all that appertains to the perception considered as passive, and merely recipient, I have adopted from our elder classics the word *sensuous*; because *sensual* is not at present used, except in a bad sense, or at least as a *moral* distinction, while



*sensitive* and *sensible* would each convey a different meaning. Thus too I have followed Hooker, Sanderson, Milton, &c. in designating the *immediateness* of any act or object of knowledge by the word *intuition*, used sometimes subjectively, sometimes objectively, even as we use the word, thought; now as *the* thought, or act of thinking, and now as *a* thought, or the object of our reflection; and we do this without confusion or obscurity. The very words, *objective* and *subjective*, of such constant recurrence in the schools of yore, I have ventured to re-introduce, because I could not so briefly, or conveniently by any more familiar terms distinguish the percipere from the percipi. Lastly, I have cautiously discriminated the terms, the REASON, and the UNDERSTANDING, encouraged and confirmed by the authority of our genuine divines, and philosophers, before the revolution.

——— “both life, and sense,  
Fancy, and *understanding*: whence the soul  
*Reason* receives, and REASON is her *being*,  
DISCURSIVE or INTUITIVE. Discourse\*  
Is ofttest your’s, the latter most is our’s,  
Differing but in *degree*, in *kind* the same.”

PARADISE LOST, *Book V.*

\* But for sundry notes on Shakspeare, &c. which have fallen in my way, I should have deemed it unnecessary to observe, that *discourse* here, or elsewhere does not mean what we *now* call discoursing; but the *discursion* of the *mind*, the processes of generalization and subsumption, of deduction



I say, that I was *confirmed* by authority so venerable: for I had previous and higher motives in my own conviction of the importance, nay, of the necessity of the distinction, as both an indispensable condition and a vital part of all sound speculation in metaphysics, ethical or theological. To establish this distinction was one main object of THE FRIEND; if even in a biography of my own literary life I can with propriety refer to a work, which was printed rather than published, or so published that it had been well for the unfortunate author, if it had remained in manuscript! I have even at this time bitter cause for remembering that, which a number of my subscribers have but a trifling motive for forgetting. This effusion might have been spared; but I would feign flatter myself, that the reader will be less austere than an oriental professor of the bastinado, who during an attempt to extort per argumentum baculinum a full confession from a culprit, interrupted his outcry of pain by reminding him, that it was "*a mere digression!*" All this noise, Sir! is nothing to the point, and no sort of answer to my QUESTIONS! *Ah! but* (replied the sufferer) *it is the most pertinent reply in nature to your blows.*

and conclusion. Thus, Philosophy has *hitherto* been DISCURSIVE: while Geometry is *always* and *essentially* INTUITIVE.



An imprudent man of common goodness of heart, cannot but wish to turn even his imprudences to the benefit of others, as far as this is possible. If therefore any one of the readers of this semi-narrative should be preparing or intending a periodical work, I warn him, in the first place, against trusting in the number of names on his subscription list. For he cannot be certain that the names were put down by sufficient authority; or should that be ascertained) it still remains to be known, whether they were not extorted by some over zealous friend's importunity; whether the subscriber had not yielded his name, merely from want of courage to answer, no! and with the intention of dropping the work as soon as possible. One gentleman procured me nearly a hundred names for THE FRIEND, and not only took frequent opportunity to remind me of his success in his canvas, but laboured to impress my mind with the sense of the obligation, I was under to the subscribers; for (as he very pertinently admonished me) "*fifty-two shillings* a year was a large sum to be bestowed on one individual, where there were so many objects of charity with strong claims to the assistance of the benevolent." Of these hundred patrons ninety threw up the publication before the fourth number, without any notice; though it was well known to them, that in consequence of



the distance, and the slowness and irregularity of the conveyance, I was compelled to lay in a stock of *stamped* paper for at least eight weeks beforehand; each sheet of which stood me in five pence previous to its arrival at my printer's; though the subscription money was not to be received till the twenty-first week after the commencement of the work; and lastly, though it was in nine cases out of ten impracticable for me to receive the money for two or three numbers without paying an equal sum for the postage.

In confirmation of my first caveat, I will select one fact among *many*. On my list of subscribers, among a considerable number of names equally flattering, was that of an Earl of Cork, with his address. He might as well have been an Earl of Bottle, for aught *I* knew of him, who had been content to reverence the peerage in abstracto, rather than in concretis. Of course THE FRIEND was regularly sent as far, if I remember right, as the eighteenth number: i. e. till a fortnight before the subscription was to be paid. And lo! just at this time I received a letter from his Lordship, reproving me in language far more lordly than courteous for my impudence in directing my pamphlets to him, who knew nothing of me or my work! Seventeen or eighteen numbers of which, however, his Lordship was pleased to retain, probably



for the culinary or post-culinary conveniences of his servants.

Secondly, I warn all others from the attempt to deviate from the ordinary mode of publishing a work by *the trade*. I thought indeed, that to the purchaser it was indifferent, whether thirty per cent. of the purchase-money went to the booksellers or to the government; and that the convenience of receiving the work by the post at his own door would give the preference to the latter. It is hard, I own, to have been labouring for years, in collecting and arranging the materials; to have spent every shilling that could be spared after the necessities of life had been furnished, in buying books, or in journies for the purpose of consulting them or of acquiring facts at the fountain head; then to buy the paper, pay for the printing, &c. all at least fifteen per cent. beyond what *the trade* would have paid; and then after all to give thirty per cent. not of the net profits, but of the gross results of the sale, to a man who has merely to give the books shelf or warehouse room, and permit his apprentice to hand them over the counter to those who may ask for them; and this too copy by copy, although if the work be on any philosophical or scientific subject, it may be years before the edition is sold off. All this, I confess, must seem an hardship, and one, to which the products of industry in no



other mode of exertion are subject. Yet even this is better, far better, than to attempt in any way to unite the functions of author and publisher. But the most prudent mode is to sell the copy-right, at least of one or more editions, for the most that *the trade* will offer. By few only can a large remuneration be expected; but fifty pounds and ease of mind are of more real advantage to a literary man, than the *chance* of five hundred with the *certainty* of insult and degrading anxieties. I shall have been grievously misunderstood, if this statement should be interpreted as written with the desire of detracting from the character of booksellers or publishers. The individuals did not make the laws and customs of their trade, but as in every other trade take them as they find them. Till the evil can be proved to be removable and without the substitution of an equal or greater inconvenience, it were neither wise or manly even to complain of it. But to use it as a pretext for speaking, or even for thinking, or feeling, unkindly or opprobiously of the tradesmen, as *individuals*, would be something worse than unwise or even than unmanly; it would be immoral and calumnious! My motives point in a far different direction and to far other objects, as will be seen in the conclusion of the chapter.

A learned and exemplary old clergyman, who many years ago went to his reward fol-



lowed by the regrets and blessings of his flock, published at his own expence two volumes octavo, entitled, a new Theory of Redemption. The work was most severely handled in the Monthly or Critical Review, I forget which, and this unprovoked hostility became the good old man's favorite topic of conversation among his friends. Well! (he used to exclaim) in the SECOND edition, I shall have an opportunity of exposing both the ignorance and the malignity of the anonymous critic. Two or three years however passed by without any tidings from the bookseller, who had undertaken the printing and publication of the work, and who was perfectly at his ease, as the author was known to be a man of large property. At length the *accounts* were written for; and in the course of a few weeks they were presented by the *rider* for the house, in person. My old friend put on his spectacles, and holding the scroll with no very firm hand, began—*Paper, so much: O moderate enough—not at all beyond my expectation! Printing, so much: well! moderate enough! Stitching, covers, advertisements, carriage, &c. so much.*—Still nothing amiss. *Selleridge* (for orthography is no necessary part of a bookseller's literary acquirements) £3. 3s. Bless me! only three guineas for the what d'ye call it? the *selleridge*? No more, Sir! replied the rider. Nay, but that is *too moderate!* re-



joined my old friend. Only three guineas for *selling* a thousand copies of a work in two volumes? O Sir! (cries the young traveller) you have mistaken the word. There have been none of them *sold*; they have been sent back from London long ago; and this £3. 3s. is for the *cellaridge*, or warehouse-room in our book *cellar*. The work was in consequence preferred from the ominous cellar of the publisher's, to the author's garret; and on presenting a copy to an acquaintance the old gentleman used to tell the anecdote with great humor and still greater good nature.

With equal lack of worldly knowledge, I was a far more than equal sufferer for it, at the very outset of my authorship. Toward the close of the first year from the time, that in an inauspicious hour I left the friendly cloysters, and the happy grove of quiet, ever honored Jesus College, Cambridge, I was persuaded by sundry Philanthropists and Anti-polemists to set on foot a periodical work, entitled THE WATCHMAN, that (according to the general motto of the work) *all might know the truth, and that the truth might make us free!* In order to exempt it from the stamp-tax, and likewise to contribute as little as possible to the supposed guilt of a war against freedom, it was to be published on every eighth day, thirty-two pages, large octavo, closely printed, and price



only FOUR-PENCE. Accordingly with a flaming prospectus, "*Knowledge is Power*," &c. to cry the state of the political atmosphere, and so forth, I set off on a tour to the North, from Bristol to Sheffield, for the purpose of procuring customers, preaching by the way in most of the great towns, as an hireless volunteer, in a blue coat and white waistcoat, that not a rag of the woman of Babylon might be seen on me. For I was at that time and long after, though a Trinitarian (i. e. ad normam Platonis) in philosophy, yet a zealous Unitarian in Religion; more accurately, I was a *psilanthropist*, one of those who believe our Lord to have been the real son of Joseph, and who lay the main stress on the resurrection rather than on the crucifixion. O! never can I remember those days with either shame or regret. For I was most sincere, most disinterested! My opinions were indeed in many and most important points erroneous; but my heart was single. Wealth, rank, life itself then seemed cheap to me, compared with the interests of (what I believed to be) the truth, and the will of my maker. I cannot even accuse myself of having been actuated by vanity; for in the expansion of my enthusiasm I did not think of *myself* at all.

My campaign commenced at Birmingham; and my first attack was on a rigid Calvinist, a tallow chandler by trade. He was a tall dingy



man, in whom length was so predominant over breadth, that he might almost have been borrowed for a foundery poker. O that face! a face κατέμφασιν! I have it before me at this moment. The lank, black, twine-like hair, *pinguin-itescent*, cut in a strait line along the black stubble of his thin gunpowder eye brows, that looked like a scorched *after-math* from a last week's shaving. His coat collar behind in perfect unison, both of colour and lustre with the coarse yet glib cordage, that I suppose he called his hair, and which with a *bend* inward at the nape of the neck (the only approach to flexure in his whole figure) slunk in behind his waistcoat; while the countenance lank, dark, very *hard*, and with strong perpendicular furrows, gave me a dim notion of some one looking at me through a *used* gridiron, all soot, grease, and iron! But he was one of the *thorough-bred*, a true lover of liberty, and (I was informed) had proved to the satisfaction of many, that Mr. Pitt was one of the horns of the second beast in the Revelations, *that spoke like a dragon*. A person, to whom one of my letters of recommendation had been addressed, was my introducer. It was a new event in my life, my first *stroke* in the new business I had undertaken of an author, yea, and of an author trading on his own account. My companion after some imperfect sentences and a multitude of



hums and haas abandoned the cause to his client; and I commenced an harangue of half an hour to Phileleutheros, the tallow-chandler, varying my notes through the whole gamut of eloquence from the ratiocinative to the declamatory, and in the latter from the pathetic to the indignant. I argued, I described, I promised, I prophesied; and beginning with the captivity of nations I ended with the near approach of the millenium, finishing the whole with some of my own verses describing that glorious state out of *the Religious Musings*:

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Such delights,  
 As float to earth, permitted visitants!  
 When in some hour of solemn jubilee  
 The massive gates of Paradise are thrown  
 Wide open: and forth come in fragments wild  
 Sweet echoes of unearthly melodies,  
 And odors snatch'd from beds of Amaranth,  
 And they that from the chrystal river of life  
 Spring up on freshen'd wings, ambrosial gales!

*Religious Musings*, l. 356.

My taper man of lights listened with perseverant and praise-worthy patience, though (as I was afterwards told on complaining of certain gales that were not altogether ambrosial) it was a *melting* day with him. And what, Sir! (he said after a short pause) might the cost be? *Only* FOUR-PENCE (O! how I felt the anti-climax, the abysmal bathos of that *four-pence*!) *only four-pence, Sir, each number, to be published on*



*every eighth day.* That comes to a deal of money at the end of a year. And how much did you say there was to be for the money? *Thirty-two pages, Sir! large octavo, closely printed.* Thirty and two pages? Bless me, why except what I does in a family way on the Sabbath, that's more than I ever reads, Sir! all the year round. I am as great a one, as any man in Brummagem, Sir! for liberty and truth and all them sort of things, but as to this (no offence, I hope, Sir!) I must beg to be excused.

So ended my first canvas: from causes that I shall presently mention, I made but one other application in person. This took place at Manchester, to a stately and opulent wholesale dealer in cottons. He took my letter of introduction, and having perused it, measured me from head to foot and again from foot to head, and then asked if I had any bill or invoice of the thing; I presented my prospectus to him; he rapidly skimmed and hummed over the first side, and still more rapidly the second and concluding page; crushed it within his fingers and the palm of his hand; then most deliberately and *significantly* rubbed and smoothed one part against the other; and lastly putting it into his pocket turned his back on me with an "*over-run* with these articles!" and so without another syllable retired into his counting-house. And I can truly say, to my unspeakable amusement.



This I have said, was my second and last attempt. On returning baffled from the first, in which I had vainly essayed to repeat the miracle of Orpheus with the Brummagem patriot, I dined with the tradesman who had introduced me to him. After dinner he importuned me to smoke a pipe with him, and two or three other illuminati of the same rank. I objected, both because I was engaged to spend the evening with a minister and his friends, and because I had never smoked except once or twice in my life time, and then it was herb tobacco mixed with Oronooko. On the assurance however that the tobacco was equally mild, and seeing too that it was of a yellow colour; (not forgetting the lamentable difficulty, I have always experienced, in saying, No! and in abstaining from what the people about me were doing) I took half a pipe, filling the lower half of the bole with salt. I was soon however compelled to resign it, in consequence of a giddiness and distressful feeling in my eyes, which as I had drank but a single glass of ale, must, I knew, have been the effect of the tobacco. Soon after, deeming myself recovered, I sallied forth to my engagement, but the walk and the fresh air brought on all the symptoms again, and I had scarcely entered the minister's drawing-room, and opened a small paquet of letters, which he had received from Bristol for



me; ere I sunk back on the sofa in a sort of swoon rather than sleep. Fortunately I had found just time enough to inform him of the confused state of my feelings, and of the occasion. For here and thus I lay, my face like a wall that is white-washing, *deathly* pale and with the cold drops of perspiration running down it from my forehead, while one after another there dropt in the different gentlemen, who had been invited to meet, and spend the evening with me, to the number of from fifteen to twenty. As the poison of tobacco acts but for a short time, I at length awoke from insensibility, and looked round on the party, my eyes dazzled by the candles which had been lighted in the interim. By way of relieving my embarrassment one of the gentlemen began the conversation, with “*Have you seen a paper to day, Mr. Coleridge?*” Sir! (I replied, rubbing my eyes) “I am far from convinced, that a christian is permitted to read either newspapers or any other works of merely political and temporary interest.” This remark so ludicrously inapposite to, or rather, incongruous with, the purpose, for which I was known to have visited Birmingham, and to assist me in which they were all then met, produced an involuntary and general burst of laughter; and seldom indeed have I passed so many delightful hours, as I enjoyed in that room from the moment of



that laugh to an early hour the next morning. Never, perhaps, in so mixed and numerous a party have I since heard conversation sustained with such animation, enriched with such variety of information and enlivened with such a flow of anecdote. Both then and afterwards they all joined in dissuading me from proceeding with my scheme; assured me in the most friendly and yet most flattering expressions, that the employment was neither fit for me, nor I fit for the employment. Yet if I had determined on persevering in it, they promised to exert themselves to the utmost to procure subscribers, and insisted that I should make no more applications in person, but carry on the canvass by proxy. The same hospitable reception, the same dissuasion, and (that failing) the same kind exertions in my behalf, I met with at Manchester, Derby, Nottingham, Sheffield, indeed, at every place in which I took up my sojourn. I often recall with affectionate pleasure the many respectable men who interested themselves for me, a perfect stranger to them, not a few of whom I can still name among my friends. They will bear witness for me, how opposite even then my principles were to those of jacobinism or even of democracy, and can attest the strict accuracy of the statement which I have left on record in the 10th and 11th numbers of *THE FRIEND*.



From this rememberable tour I returned with nearly a thousand names on the subscription list of the Watchman ; yet more than half convinced, that prudence dictated the abandonment of the scheme. But for this very reason I persevered in it ; for I was at that period of my life so compleatly hag-ridden by the fear of being influenced by selfish motives that to know a mode of conduct to be the dictate of *prudence* was a sort of presumptive proof to my feelings, that the contrary was the dictate of *duty*. Accordingly, I commenced the work, which was announced in London by long bills in letters larger than had ever been seen before, and which (I have been informed, for I did not see them myself) eclipsed the glories even of the lottery puffs. But, alas ! the publication of the very first number was delayed beyond the day announced for its appearance. In the second number an essay against fast days, with a most censurable application of a text from Isaiah for its motto, lost me near five hundred of my subscribers at one blow. In the two following numbers I made enemies of all my Jacobin and Democratic Patrons ; for disgusted by their infidelity, and their adoption of French morals with French *psilosophy* ; and perhaps thinking, that charity ought to begin nearest home ; instead of abusing the Government and the Aristocrats chiefly or entirely, as had been expected



of me, I levelled my attacks at “*modern patriotism*”, and even ventured to declare my belief that whatever the motives of ministers might have been for the sedition (or as it was then the fashion to call them, the *gagging*) bills, yet the bills themselves would produce an effect to be desired by all the true friends of freedom, as far as they should contribute to deter men from openly declaiming on subjects, the principles of which they had never bottomed, and from “pleading to the poor and ignorant, instead of pleading *for* them.” At the same time I avowed my conviction, that national education and a concurring spread of the gospel were the indispensable condition of any true political amelioration. Thus by the time the seventh number was published, I had the mortification (but why should I say this, when in truth I cared too little for any thing that concerned my worldly interests to be at all mortified about it?) of seeing the preceding numbers exposed in sundry old iron shops for a penny a piece. At the ninth number I dropt the work. But from the London publisher I could not obtain a shilling; he was a ——— and set me at defiance. From other places I procured but little, and after such delays as rendered that little worth nothing: and I should have been inevitably thrown into jail by my Bristol printer, who refused to wait even for a month, for a sum be-



tween eighty and ninety pounds, if the money had not been paid for me by a man by no means affluent, a dear friend who attached himself to me from my first arrival at Bristol, who has continued my friend with a fidelity unconquered by time or even by my own apparent neglect; a friend from whom I never received an advice that was not wise, or a remonstrance that was not gentle and affectionate.

Conscientiously an opponent of the first revolutionary war, yet with my eyes thoroughly opened to the true character and impotence of the favorers of revolutionary principles in England, principles which I held in abhorrence (for it was part of my political creed, that whoever ceased to act as an *individual* by making himself a member of any *society* not sanctioned by his Government, forfeited the rights of a citizen)—a vehement anti-ministerialist, but after the invasion of Switzerland a more vehement anti-gallican, and still more intensely an anti-jacobin, I retired to a cottage at Stowey, and provided for my scanty maintenance by writing verses for a London Morning Paper. I saw plainly, that literature was not a profession, by which I could expect to live; for I could not disguise from myself, that whatever my talents might or might not be in other respects, yet they were not of the sort that could enable me to become a popular writer; and that whatever



my opinions might be in themselves, they were almost equi-distant from all the three prominent parties, the Pittites, the Foxites, and the Democrats. Of the unsaleable nature of my writings I had an amusing memento one morning from our own servant girl. For happening to rise at an earlier hour than usual, I observed her putting an extravagant quantity of paper into the grate in order to light the fire, and mildly checked her for her wastefulness; la, Sir! (replied poor Nanny) why, it is only "WATCHMEN."

I now devoted myself to poetry and to the study of ethics and psychology; and so profound was my admiration at this time of Hartley's Essay on Man, that I gave his name to my first born. In addition to the gentleman, my neighbour, whose garden joined on to my little orchard, and the cultivation of whose friendship had been my sole motive in choosing Stowey for my residence, I was so fortunate as to acquire, shortly after my settlement there, an invaluable blessing in the society and neighbourhood of one, to whom I could look up with equal reverence, whether I regarded him as a poet, a philosopher, or a man. His conversation extended to almost all subjects, except physics and politics; with the latter he never troubled himself. Yet neither my retirement nor my utter abstraction from all the disputes



of the day could secure me in those jealous times from suspicion and obloquy, which did not stop at me, but extended to my excellent friend, whose perfect innocence was even adduced as a proof of his guilt. One of the many busy *sycophants*\* of that day (I here use the word *sycophant*, in its original sense, as a wretch who *flatters* the prevailing party by *informing* against his neighbours, under pretence that they are exporters of prohibited *figs* or *fancies*! for the moral application of the term it matters not which)—one of these sycophantic law-mongrels, discoursing on the *politics* of the neighbourhood, uttered the following *deep* remark: “As to *Coleridge*, there is not so much harm in *him*, for he is a whirl-brain that talks whatever comes uppermost; but that ———! he is the *dark* traitor. *You never hear HIM say a syllable on the subject.*”

Now that the hand of providence has disciplined *all* Europe into sobriety, as men tame wild elephants, by alternate blows and caresses; now that Englishmen of all classes are restored to their old English notions and feelings; it will with difficulty be credited, how great an influence was at that time possessed and exerted by the spirit of secret defamation (the too constant attendant on party-zeal!)

\* ΣΥΚΟΣ ΦΑΙΝΕΙΝ, to shew or detect figs, the exportation of which from Attica was forbidden by the laws.



during the restless interim from 1793 to the commencement of the Addington administration, or the year before the truce of Amiens. For by the latter period the minds of the partizans, exhausted by excess of stimulation and humbled by mutual disappointment, had become languid. The same causes, that inclined the nation to peace, disposed the individuals to reconciliation. Both parties had found themselves in the wrong. The one had confessedly mistaken the moral character of the revolution, and the other had miscalculated both its moral and its physical resources. The experiment was made at the price of great, almost we may say, of humiliating sacrifices ; and wise men foresaw that it would fail, at least in its direct and ostensible object. Yet it was purchased cheaply, and realized an object of equal value, and, if possible, of still more vital importance. For it brought about a national unanimity unexampled in our history since the reign of Elizabeth ; and providence, never wanting to a good work when men have done their parts, soon provided a common focus in the cause of Spain, which made us all once more Englishmen by at once gratifying and correcting the predilections of both parties. The sincere reverers of the throne felt the cause of loyalty ennobled by its alliance with that of freedom ; while the *honest* zealots of the people



could not but admit, that freedom itself assumed a more winning form, humanized by loyalty and consecrated by religious principle. The youthful enthusiasts who, flattered by the morning rainbow of the French revolution, had made a boast of *expatriating* their hopes and fears, now disciplined by the succeeding storms and sobered by increase of years, had been taught to prize and honor the spirit of nationality as the best safeguard of national independence, and this again as the absolute pre-requisite and necessary basis of popular rights.

If in Spain too disappointment has nipt our too forward expectations, yet all is not destroyed that is checked. The crop was perhaps springing up too rank in the stalk, to *kern* well ; and there were, doubtless, symptoms of the Gallican *blight* on it. If superstition and despotism have been suffered to let in their woolvish sheep to trample and eat it down even to the surface, yet the roots remain alive, and the second growth may prove all the stronger and healthier for the temporary interruption. At all events, to *us* heaven has been just and gracious. The *people* of England did their best, and have received their rewards. Long may we continue to deserve it ! Causes, which it had been too generally the habit of former statesmen to regard as belonging to another world, are now admitted by all ranks to have been the main



agents of our success. “ *We fought from heaven ; the stars in their courses fought against Sisera.*” If then unanimity grounded on moral feelings has been among the least equivocal sources of our national glory, that man deserves the esteem of his countrymen, even as patriots, who devotes his life and the utmost efforts of his intellect to the preservation and continuance of that unanimity by the disclosure and establishment of *principles*. For by these all *opinions* must be ultimately tried ; and (as the feelings of men are worthy of regard only as far as they are the representatives of their fixed opinions) on the knowledge of these all unanimity, not accidental and fleeting, must be grounded. Let the scholar, who doubts this assertion, refer only to the speeches and writings of EDMUND BURKE at the commencement of the American war, and compare them with his speeches and writings at the commencement of the French revolution. He will find the *principles* exactly the same and the deductions the same ; but the practical inferences almost opposite, in the one case from those drawn in the other ; yet in both equally legitimate and in both equally confirmed by the results. Whence gained he this superiority of foresight ? Whence arose the striking *difference*, and in most instances even the discrepancy between the grounds assigned by *him*, and by those who



voted *with* him, on the same questions? How are we to explain the notorious fact, that the speeches and writings of EDMUND BURKE are more interesting at the present day, than they were found at the time of their first publication; while those of his illustrious confederates are either forgotten, or exist only to furnish proofs, that the same conclusion, which one man had deduced scientifically, *may* be brought out by another in consequence of errors that luckily chanced to neutralize each other. It would be unhandsome as a conjecture, even were it not, as it actually is, false in point of fact, to attribute this difference to deficiency of talent on the part of Burke's friends, or of experience, or of historical knowledge. The satisfactory solution is, that Edmund Burke possessed and had sedulously sharpened that eye, which sees all things, actions, and events, in relation to the *laws* that determine their existence and circumscribe their possibility. He referred habitually to *principles*. He was a *scientific* statesman; and therefore a *seer*. For every *principle* contains in itself the germs of a prophecy; and as the prophetic power is the essential privilege of science, so the fulfilment of its oracles supplies the outward and (to men in general) the *only* test of its claim to the title. Wearisome as Burke's refinements appeared to his parliamentary auditors, yet the



cultivated classes throughout Europe have reason to be thankful, that

————— he went on refining,  
And thought of convincing, while they thought of dining.

Our very sign boards (said an illustrious friend to me) give evidence, that there has been a **TITIAN** in the world. In like manner, not only the debates in parliament, not only our proclamations and state papers, but the essays and leading paragraphs of our journals are so many remembrancers of **EDMUND BURKE**. Of this the reader may easily convince himself, if either by recollection or reference he will compare the opposition newspapers at the commencement and during the five or six following years of the French revolution with the sentiments, and grounds of argument assumed in the same class of Journals at present, and for some years past.

Whether the spirit of jacobinism, which the writings of Burke exorcised from the higher and from the literary classes, may not like the ghost in Hamlet, be heard moving and mining in the underground chambers with an activity the more dangerous because less noisy, may admit of a question. I have given my opinions on this point, and the grounds of them, in my letters to Judge Fletcher occasioned by his **CHARGE** to the Wexford grand jury, and published in the *Courier*. Be this as it may, the



evil spirit of jealousy, and with it the cerberean whelps of feud and slander, no longer walk their rounds, in cultivated society.

Far different were the days to which these anecdotes have carried me back. The dark guesses of some zealous Quidnunc met with so congenial a soil in the grave alarm of a titled Dogberry of our neighbourhood, that a *SPY* was actually sent down from the government *pour surveillance* of myself and friend. There must have been not only abundance, but *variety* of these "honorable men" at the disposal of Ministers: for this proved a very honest fellow. After three week's truly Indian perseverance in tracking us (for we were commonly together) during all which time seldom were we out of doors, but he contrived to be within hearing (and all the while utterly unsuspected; how indeed *could* such a suspicion enter our fancies?) he not only rejected Sir Dogberry's request that he would try yet a little longer, but declared to him his belief, that both my friend and myself were as good subjects, for aught he could discover to the contrary, as any in His Majesty's dominions. He had repeatedly hid himself, he said, for hours together behind a bank at the sea-side (our favorite seat) and overheard our conversation. At first he fancied, that we were aware of our danger; for he often heard me talk of one *Spy Nozy*, which he was inclined



to interpret of himself, and of a remarkable feature belonging to him ; but he was speedily convinced that it was the name of a man who had made a book and lived long ago. Our talk ran most upon books, and we were perpetually desiring each other to look at *this*, and to listen to *that* ; but he could not catch a word about politics. Once he had joined me on the road ; (this occurred, as I was returning home alone from my friend's house, which was about three miles from my own cottage) and passing himself off as a traveller, he had entered into conversation with me, and talked of purpose in a *democrat* way in order to draw me out. The result, it appears, not only convinced him that I was no friend of jacobinism ; but (he added) I had “ plainly made it out to be such a silly as well as wicked thing, that he felt ashamed, though he had only *put it on*.” I distinctly remembered the occurrence, and had mentioned it immediately on my return, repeating what the traveller with his Bardolph nose had said, with my own answer ; and so little did I suspect the true object of my “ tempter ere accuser,” that I expressed with no small pleasure my hope and belief, that the conversation had been of some service to the poor misled malcontent. This incident therefore prevented all doubt as to the truth of the report, which through a friendly medium came to me from



the master of the village inn, who had been ordered to entertain the *Government Gentleman* in his best manner, but above all to be silent concerning such a person being in his house. At length, he received Sir Dogberry's commands to accompany his guest at the final interview; and after the absolving suffrage of the *gentleman honored with the confidence of Ministers* answered, as follows, to the following queries? D. Well, landlord! and what do you know of the person in question? L. I see him often pass by with maister ———, my landlord (*i. e. the owner of the house*) and sometimes with the new-comers at Holford; but I never said a word to him or he to me. D. But do you not know, that he has distributed papers and hand-bills of a seditious nature among the common people? L. No, your honor! I never heard of such a thing. D. Have you not seen this Mr. Coleridge, or heard of, his haranguing and talking to knots and clusters of the inhabitants?—What are you grinning at, Sir! L. Beg your honor's pardon! but I was only thinking, how they'd have stared at him. If what I have heard be true, your honor! they would not have understood a word, he said. When our vicar was here, Dr. L. the master of the great school and canon of Windsor, there was a great dinner party at maister ———'s; and one of the farmers,



that was there, told us that he and the Doctor talked real Hebrew Greek at each other for an hour together after dinner. D. Answer the question, Sir! Does he ever harangue the people? L. I hope, your honor an't angry with me. I can say no more than I know. I never saw him talking with any one, but my landlord, and our curate, and the strange gentleman. D. Has he not been seen wandering on the hills towards the Channel, and along the shore, with books and papers in his hand, taking charts and maps of the country? L. Why, as to that, your honor! I own, I have heard; I am sure, I would not wish to say ill of any body; but it is certain, that I have heard—D. Speak out man! don't be afraid, you are doing your duty to your King and Government. What have you heard? L. Why, folks do say, your honor! as how that he is a *Poet*, and that he is going to put Quantock and all about here in print; and as they be so much together, I suppose that the strange gentleman has some *consarn* in the business.—So ended this formidable inquisition, the latter part of which alone requires explanation, and at the same time entitles the anecdote to a place in my literary life. I had considered it as a defect in the admirable poem of the TASK, that the subject, which gives the title to the work, was not, and indeed could not be, carried on



beyond the three or four first pages, and that throughout the poem the connections are frequently awkward, and the transitions abrupt and arbitrary. I sought for a subject, that should give equal room and freedom for description, incident, and impassioned reflections on men, nature, and society, yet supply in itself a natural connection to the parts, and unity to the whole. Such a subject I conceived myself to have found in a stream, traced from its source in the hills among the yellow-red moss and conical glass-shaped tufts of Bent, to the first break or fall, where its drops became audible, and it begins to form a channel ; thence to the peat and turf barn, itself built of the same dark squares as it sheltered ; to the sheepfold ; to the first cultivated plot of ground ; to the lonely cottage and its bleak garden won from the heath ; to the hamlet, the villages, the market-town, the manufactories, and the seaport. My walks therefore were almost daily on the top of Quantock, and among its sloping coombs. With my pencil and memorandum book in my hand, I was *making studies*, as the artists call them, and often moulding my thoughts into verse, with the objects and imagery immediately before my senses. Many circumstances, evil and good, intervened to prevent the completion of the poem, which was to have been entitled "THE BROOK." Had I finished



the work, it was my purpose in the heat of the moment to have dedicated it to our then committee of public safety as containing the charts and maps, with which I was to have supplied the French Government in aid of their plans of invasion. And these too for a tract of coast that from Clevedon to Minehead scarcely permits the approach of a fishing boat!

All my experience from my first entrance into life to the present hour is in favor of the warning maxim, that the man, who opposes in toto the political or religious zealots of his age, is safer from their obloquy than he who differs from them in one or two points or perhaps only in degree. By that transfer of the feelings of private life into the discussion of public questions, which is the *queen bee* in the hive of party fanaticism, the partizan has more sympathy with an intemperate Opposite than with a moderate Friend. We now enjoy an intermission, and long may it continue! In addition to far higher and more important merits, our present bible societies and other numerous associations for national or charitable objects, may serve perhaps to carry off the superfluous activity and fervor of stirring minds in innocent hyperboles and the bustle of management. But the poison-tree is not dead, though the sap may for a season have subsided to its roots. At least let us not be lulled into such a notion of



our entire security, as not to keep watch and ward, even on our best feelings. I have seen gross intolerance shewn in support of toleration ; sectarian antipathy most obtrusively displayed in the promotion of an undistinguishing comprehension of sects ; and acts of cruelty (I had almost said) of treachery, committed in furtherance of an object vitally important to the cause of humanity ; and all this by men too of naturally kind dispositions and exemplary conduct.

The magic rod of fanaticism is preserved in the very adyta of human nature ; and needs only the re-exciting warmth of a master hand to bud forth afresh and produce the old fruits. The horror of the peasant's war in Germany, and the direful effects of the Anabaptist's tenets (which differed only from those of jacobinism by the substitution of theological for philosophical jargon) struck all Europe for a time with affright. Yet little more than a century was sufficient to obliterate all effective memory of these events. The same principles with similar though less dreadful consequences were again at work from the imprisonment of the first Charles to the restoration of his son. The fanatic maxim of extirpating fanaticism by persecution produced a civil war. The war ended in the victory of the insurgents ; but the temper survived, and Milton had abundant grounds



for asserting, that "Presbyter was but OLD PRIEST writ large!" One good result, thank heaven! of this zealotry was the re-establishment of the church. And now it might have been hoped, that the mischievous spirit would have been bound for a season, "and a seal set upon him that he might deceive the nation no more." But no! The ball of persecution was taken up with undiminished vigor by the persecuted. The same fanatic principle, that under the solemn oath and covenant had turned cathedrals into stables, destroyed the rarest trophies of art and ancestral piety, and hunted the brightest ornaments of learning and religion into holes and corners, now marched under episcopal banners, and having first crowded the prisons of England emptied its whole vial of wrath on the miserable covenanters of Scotland. (*Laing's History of Scotland.—Walter Scott's bards, ballads, &c.*) A merciful providence at length constrained both parties to join against a common enemy. A wise Government followed; and the established church became, and now is, not only the brightest example, but our best and only sure bulwark, of toleration! The true and indispensable bank against a new inundation of persecuting zeal—ESTO PERPETUA!

A long interval of quiet succeeded; or rather, the exhaustion had produced a cold fit of



the ague which was symptomatized by indifference among the many, and a tendency to infidelity or scepticism in the educated classes. At length those feelings of disgust and hatred, which for a brief while the multitude had attached to the crimes and absurdities of sectarian and democratic fanaticism, were transferred to the oppressive privileges of the noblesse, and the luxury, intrigues and favoritism of the continental courts. The same principles dressed in the ostentatious garb of a fashionable philosophy once more rose triumphant and effected the French revolution. And have we not within the last three or four years had reason to apprehend, that the detestable maxims and correspondent measures of the late French despotism had already bedimmed the public recollections of democratic phrensy; had drawn off to other objects the electric force of the feelings which had massed and upheld those recollections; and that a favorable concurrence of occasions was alone wanting to awaken the thunder and precipitate the lightning from the opposite quarter of the political heaven? (See THE FRIEND, p. 110.)

In part from constitutional indolence, which in the very hey-day of hope had kept my enthusiasm in check, but still more from the habits and influences of a classical education and academic pursuits, scarcely had a year



elapsed from the commencement of my literary and political adventures before my mind sunk into a state of thorough disgust and despondency, both with regard to the disputes and the parties disputant. With more than *poetic* feeling I exclaimed :

“The sensual and the dark rebel in vain,  
 Slaves by their own compulsion ! In mad game  
 They break their manacles, to wear the *name*  
 Of freedom, graven on an heavier chain.  
 O liberty ! with profitless endeavor  
 Have I pursued thee many a weary hour ;  
 But thou nor swell'st the victor's pomp, nor ever  
 Didst breathe thy soul in forms of human power !  
 Alike from all, howe'er they praise thee  
 (Nor prayer nor boastful name delays thee)  
 From superstition's harpy minions  
 And factious blasphemy's obscener slaves,  
 Thou speedest on thy cherub pinions,  
 The guide of homeless winds and playmate of the waves !”

FRANCE, a *Palinodia*.

I retired to a cottage in Somersetshire at the foot of Quantock, and devoted my thoughts and studies to the foundations of religion and morals. Here I found myself all afloat. Doubts rushed in ; broke upon me “*from the fountains of the great deep,*” and fell “*from the windows of heaven.*” The fontal truths of natural religion and the books of Revelation alike contributed to the flood ; and it was long ere my ark touched on an Ararat, and rested. The *idea* of the Supreme Being appeared to me to be as neces-



sarily implied in all particular modes of being as the idea of infinite space in all the geometrical figures by which space is limited. I was pleased with the Cartesian opinion, that the idea of God is distinguished from all other ideas by involving its *reality*; but I was not wholly satisfied. I began then to ask myself, what proof I had of the outward *existence* of any thing? Of this sheet of paper for instance, as a thing in itself, separate from the phænomenon or image in my perception. I saw, that in the nature of things such proof is impossible; and that of all modes of being, that are not objects of the senses, the existence is *assumed* by a logical necessity arising from the constitution of the mind itself, by the absence of all motive to doubt it, not from any absolute contradiction in the supposition of the contrary. Still the existence of a being, the ground of all existence, was not yet the existence of a moral creator, and governor. “In the position, that all reality is either contained *in* the necessary being as an *attribute*, or exists *through* him, as its *ground*, it remains undecided whether the properties of intelligence and will are to be referred to the Supreme Being in the former or only in the latter sense; as inherent attributes, or only as *consequences* that have existence in other things *through* him. Thus organization, and motion, are regarded as *from* God not *in*



God. Were the latter the truth, then notwithstanding all the pre-eminence which must be assigned to the ETERNAL FIRST from the sufficiency, unity, and independence of his being, as the dread ground of the universe, his nature would yet fall far short of that, which we are bound to comprehend in the idea of God. For without any knowledge or determining resolve of its own it would only be a blind necessary ground of other things and other spirits; and thus would be distinguished from the FATE of certain ancient philosophers in no respect, but that of being more definitely and intelligibly described." KANT'S *einzig möglicher Beweisgrund: vermischte Schriften, Zweiter Band*, § 102, and 103.

For a very long time indeed I could not reconcile personality with infinity; and my head was with Spinoza, though my whole heart remained with Paul and John. Yet there had dawned upon me, even before I had met with the Critique of the Pure Reason, a certain guiding light. If the mere intellect could make no certain discovery of a holy and intelligent first cause, it might yet supply a demonstration, that no legitimate argument could be drawn from the intellect *against* its truth. And what is this more than St. Paul's assertion, that by wisdom (more properly translated by the powers of reasoning) no man ever arrived at the know-



ledge of God? What more than the sublimest,  
and probably the oldest, book on earth has  
taught us,

Silver and gold man searcheth out :  
Bringeth the ore out of the earth, and darkness into light.

But where findeth he wisdom ?  
Where is the place of understanding ?

The abyss crieth ; it is not in me !  
Ocean echoeth back ; not in me !

Whence then cometh wisdom ?  
Where dwelleth understanding ?

Hidden from the eyes of the living :  
Kept secret from the fowls of heaven !

Hell and death answer ;  
We have heard the rumour thereof from afar !

GOD marketh out the road to it ;  
GOD knoweth its abiding place !

He beholdeth the ends of the earth ;  
He surveyeth what is beneath the heavens !

And as he weighed out the winds, and measured the sea,  
And appointed laws to the rain,  
And a path to the thunder,  
A path to the flashes of the lightning !

Then did he see it,  
And he counted it ;  
He searched into the depth thereof,  
And with a line did he compass it round !

But to man he said,  
The fear of the Lord is wisdom for THEE !  
And to avoid evil,  
That is *thy* understanding.

JOB, CHAP. 28th.



I became convinced, that religion, as both the corner-stone and the key-stone of morality, must have a *moral* origin ; so far at least, that the evidence of its doctrines could not, like the truths of abstract science, be wholly independent of the will. It were therefore to be expected, that its *fundamental* truth would be such as MIGHT be denied ; though only, by the *fool*, and even by the fool from the madness of the *heart* alone !

The question then concerning our faith in the existence of a God, not only as the *ground* of the universe by his essence, but as its maker and judge by his wisdom and holy will, appeared to stand thus. The sciential *reason*, whose objects are purely theoretical, remains neutral, as long as its name and semblance are not usurped by the opponents of the doctrine. But it *then* becomes an effective ally by exposing the false shew of demonstration, or by evincing the equal demonstrability of the contrary from premises equally logical. The *understanding* mean time suggests, the analogy of *experience* facilitates, the belief. Nature excites and recalls it, as by a perpetual revelation. Our feelings almost necessitate it ; and the law of conscience peremptorily commands it. The arguments, that at all apply to it, are in its favor ; and there is nothing against it, but its own sublimity. It could not be intellec-



tually more evident without becoming morally less effective; without counteracting its own end by sacrificing the *life* of faith to the cold mechanism of a worthless because compulsory assent. The belief of a God and a future state (if a passive acquiescence may be flattered with the name of *belief*) does not indeed always beget a good heart; but a good heart so naturally begets the belief, that the very few exceptions must be regarded as strange anomalies from strange and unfortunate circumstances.

From these premises I proceeded to draw the following conclusions. First, that having once fully admitted the existence of an infinite yet self-conscious Creator, we are not allowed to ground the irrationality of any other article of faith on arguments which would equally prove that to be irrational, which we had allowed to be *real*. Secondly, that whatever is deducible from the admission of a *self-comprehending* and *creative* spirit may be legitimately used in proof of the *possibility* of any further mystery concerning the divine nature. *Possibilitatem* mysteriorum, (Trinitatis, &c.) contra insultus Infidelium et Hereticorum a contradictionibus vindico; haud quidem *veritatem*, quæ revelatione solâ stabiliri possit; says LEIBNITZ in a letter to his Duke. He then adds the following just and important remark. "In vain will tradition or texts of scripture be



adduced in support of a doctrine, donec clava impossibilitatis et contradictionis e manibus horum Herculum extorta fuerit. For the heretic will still reply, that texts, the literal sense of which is not so much *above* as directly *against* all reason, must be understood *figuratively*, as Herod is a fox, &c."

These principles I held, *philosophically*, while in respect of revealed religion I remained a zealous Unitarian. I considered the *idea* of the Trinity a fair scholastic inference from the being of God, as a creative intelligence; and that it was therefore entitled to the rank of an *esoteric* doctrine of natural religion. But seeing in the same no practical or moral bearing, I confined it to the schools of philosophy. The admission of the logos, as *hypostasized* (i. e. neither a mere attribute or a personification) in no respect removed my doubts concerning the incarnation and the redemption by the cross; which I could neither reconcile *in reason* with the impassiveness of the Divine Being, nor in my moral feelings with the sacred distinction between things and persons, the vicarious payment of a debt and the vicarious expiation of guilt. A more thorough revolution in my philosophic principles, and a deeper insight into my own heart, were yet wanting. Nevertheless, I cannot doubt, that the difference of my metaphysical notions from those of Unitarians in



general contributed to my final re-conversion to the whole truth in Christ; even as according to his own confession the books of certain Platonic philosophers (*libri quorundam Platoniorum*) commenced the rescue of St. Augustine's faith from the same error aggravated by the far darker accompaniment of the Manichæan heresy.

While my mind was thus perplexed, by a gracious providence for which I can never be sufficiently grateful, the generous and munificent patronage of Mr. JOSIAH, and Mr. THOMAS WEDGEWOOD enabled me to finish my education in Germany. Instead of troubling others with my own crude notions and juvenile compositions I was thenceforward better employed in attempting to store my own head with the wisdom of others. I made the best use of my time and means; and there is therefore no period of my life on which I can look back with such unmingled satisfaction. After acquiring a tolerable sufficiency in the German language\* at Ratzeburg, which with my voyage

\* To those, who design to acquire the language of a country in the country itself, it may be useful, if I mention the incalculable advantage which I derived from learning all the words, that could possibly be so learnt, with the objects before me, and without the intermediation of the English terms. It was a regular part of my morning studies for the first six weeks of my residence at Ratzeburg, to accompany the good and kind old pastor, with whom I lived, from the



and journey thither I have described in **THE FRIEND**, I proceeded through Hanover to Göttingen.

Here I regularly attended the lectures on physiology in the morning, and on natural history in the evening, under **BLUMENBACH**, a name as dear to every Englishman who has studied at that university, as it is venerable to men of science throughout Europe! Eichhorn's lectures on the New Testament were

cellar to the roof, through gardens, farm yard, &c. and to call every, the minutest, thing by its German name. Advertisements, farces, jest books, and the conversation of children while I was at play with them, contributed their share to a more home-like acquaintance with the language, than I could have acquired from works of polite literature alone, or even from polite society. There is a passage of *heartly* sound sense in Luther's German letter on interpretation, to the translation of which I shall prefix, for the sake of those who read the German, yet are not likely to have dipt often in the massive folios of this heroic reformer, the simple, sinewy, idiomatic words of the original. "Denn man muss nicht die Buchstaben in der Lateinischen Sprache fragen wie man soll Deutsch reden; sondern man muss die mutter im Hause, die Kinder auf den Gassen, den gemeinen Mann auf dem Markte, darum fragen: und denselbigen auf das Maul sehen wie sie reden, und darnach dollmetschen. So verstehen sie es denn, und merken dass man Deutsch mit ihnen redet."

#### TRANSLATION.

For one must not ask the letters in the Latin tongue, how one ought to speak German; but one must ask the mother in the house, the children in the lanes and alleys, the common man in the market, concerning this; yea, and look at the *moves* of their mouths while they are talking, and thereafter interpret. They understand you then, and mark that one talks German with them.



repeated to me from notes by a student from Ratzeburg, a young man of sound learning and indefatigable industry, who is now, I believe, a professor of the oriental languages at Heidelberg. But my chief efforts were directed towards a grounded knowledge of the German language and literature. From professor TYCHSEN I received as many lessons in the Gothic of Ulphilas as sufficed to make me acquainted with its grammar, and the radical words of most frequent occurrence; and with the occasional assistance of the same philosophical linguist, I read through\* OTTFRIED'S metrical paraphrase of the gospel, and the most important remains of the THEOTISCAN, or the transitional state of the Teutonic language from the Gothic to the old German of the Swabian period. Of this period (the polished dialect of which is analogous to that of our Chaucer, and which leaves the philosophic student in doubt, whether the language has not since then lost more in sweetness and flexibility, than it has gained in condensation and copiousness) I read with sedulous accuracy the MINNESINGER (or singers of love, the provençal poets of the Swabian court) and the metrical romances;

\* This paraphrase, written about the time of Charlemagne, is by no means deficient in occasional passages of considerable poetic merit. There is a flow, and a tender enthusiasm in the following lines (at the conclusion of Chapter V.)



and then laboured through sufficient specimens of the *master singers*, their degenerate successors; not however without occasional pleasure

which even in the translation will not, I flatter myself, fail to interest the reader. Ottfried is describing the circumstances immediately following the birth of our Lord.

She gave with joy her virgin breast;  
 She hid it not, she bared the breast,  
 Which suckled that divinest babe!  
 Blessed, blessed were the breasts  
 Which the Saviour infant kiss'd;  
 And blessed, blessed was the mother  
 Who wrapp'd his limbs in swaddling clothes,  
 Singing placed him on her lap,  
 Hung o'er him with her looks of love,  
 And soothed him with a lulling motion.  
 Blessed! for she shelter'd him  
 From the damp and chilling air;  
 Blessed, blessed! for she lay  
 With such a babe in one blest bed,  
 Close as babes and mothers lie!  
 Blessed, blessed evermore,  
 With her virgin lips she kiss'd,  
 With her arms, and to her breast  
 She embraced the babe divine,  
 Her babe divine the virgin mother!  
 There lives not on this ring of earth  
 A mortal, that can sing her praise.  
 Mighty mother, virgin pure,  
 In the darkness and the night  
 For us she *bore* the heavenly Lord!

Most interesting is it to consider the effect, when the feelings are wrought above the natural pitch by the belief of something mysterious, while all the images are purely natural. Then it is, that religion and poetry strike deepest.



from the rude, yet interesting strains of HANS SACHS the cobbler of Nuremberg. Of this man's genius five folio volumes with double columns are extant in print, and nearly an equal number in manuscript; yet the indefatigable bard takes care to inform his readers, that he never *made a shoe the less*, but had virtuously reared a large family by the labor of his hands.

In Pindar, Chaucer, Dante, Milton, &c. &c. we have instances of the close connection of poetic genius with the love of liberty and of genuine reformation. The *moral* sense at least will not be outraged, if I add to the list the name of this honest shoemaker (a trade by the bye remarkable for the production of philosophers and poets.) His poem intitled the MORNING STAR, was the very first publication that appeared in praise and support of LUTHER; and an excellent hymn of Hans Sachs, which has been deservedly translated into almost all the European languages, was commonly sung in the Protestant churches, whenever the heroic reformer visited them.

In Luther's own German writings, and eminently in his translation of the bible, the *German* language commenced. I mean the language as it is at present *written*; that which is called the HIGH GERMAN, as contra-distinguished from the PLATT-TEUTSCH, the dialect of the flat or northern countries, and from the OBER-TEUTSCH,



the language of the middle and Southern Germany. The High German is indeed a *lingua communis*, not actually the native language of any province, but the choice and fragrancy of all the dialects. From this cause it is at once the most copious and the most grammatical of all the European tongues.

Within less than a century after Luther's death the German was inundated with pedantic barbarisms. A few volumes of this period I read through from motives of curiosity; for it is not easy to imagine any thing more fantastic, than the very appearance of their pages. Almost every third word is a Latin word with a Germanized ending, the Latin portion being always printed in Roman letters, while in the last syllable the German character is retained.

At length, about the year 1620, OPITZ arose, whose genius more nearly resembled that of Dryden than any other poet, who at present occurs to my recollection. In the opinion of LESSING, the most acute of critics, and of ADELUNG, the first of Lexicographers, Opitz, and the Silesian poets, his followers, not only restored the language, but still remain the models of pure diction. A stranger has no vote on such a question; but after repeated perusal of the work my feelings justified the verdict, and I seemed to have acquired from them a sort of *tact* for what is *genuine* in the style of later writers.



Of the splendid era, which commenced with Gellert, Klopstock, Ramler, Lessing, and their compeers, I need not speak. With the opportunities which I enjoyed, it would have been disgraceful not to have been familiar with their writings; and I have already said as much, as the present biographical sketch requires, concerning the German philosophers, whose works, for the greater part, I became acquainted with at a far later period.

Soon after my return from Germany I was solicited to undertake the literary and political department in the Morning Post; and I acceded to the proposal on the condition, that the paper should thenceforwards be conducted on certain fixed and announced principles, and that I should be neither obliged or requested to deviate from them in favor of any party or any event. In consequence, that Journal became and for many years continued *anti-ministerial* indeed, yet with a very qualified approbation of the opposition, and with far greater earnestness and zeal both anti-jacobin and anti-gallican. To this hour I cannot find reason to approve of the first war either in its commencement or its conduct. Nor can I understand, with what reason either Mr. Percival (whom I am singular enough to regard as the best and wisest minister of this reign) or the present administration, can be said to have pur-



sued the plans of Mr. PITT. The love of their country, and perseverant hostility to French principles and French ambition are indeed honourable qualities common to them and to their predecessor. But it appears to me as clear as the evidence of facts can render any question of history, that the successes of the Percival and of the existing ministry have been owing to their having pursued measures the direct contrary to Mr. Pitt's. Such for instance are the concentration of the national force to one object; the abandonment of the *subsidizing* policy, so far at least as neither to goad or bribe the continental courts into war, till the convictions of their subjects had rendered it a war of their own seeking; and above all, in their manly and generous reliance on the good sense of the English people, and on that loyalty which is linked to the very\* heart of the nation by the system of credit and the interdependence of property.

Be this as it may, I am persuaded that the Morning Post proved a far more useful ally to the Government in its most important objects, in consequence of its being generally considered

\* Lord Grenville has lately re-asserted (in the House of Lords) the imminent danger of a revolution in the earlier part of the war against France. I doubt not, that his Lordship is sincere; and it must be flattering to his feelings to believe it. But where are the evidences of the danger, to



as moderately anti-ministerial, than if it had been the avowed eulogist of Mr. Pitt. (The few, whose curiosity or fancy should lead them to turn over the Journals of that date, may find a small proof of this in the frequent charges made by the Morning Chronicle, that such and such essays or leading paragraphs had been

which a future historian can appeal? Or must he rest on an assertion? Let me be permitted to extract a passage on the subject from THE FRIEND. "I have said that to withstand the arguments of the lawless, the Antijacobins proposed to suspend the law, and by the interposition of a particular statute to eclipse the blessed light of the universal sun, that spies and informers might tyrannize and escape in the ominous darkness. Oh! if these mistaken men intoxicated and bewildered with the panic of property, which they themselves were the chief agents in exciting, had ever lived in a country where there really existed a general disposition to change and rebellion! Had they ever travelled through Sicily; or through France at the first coming on of the revolution; or even alas! through too many of the provinces of a sister island; they could not but have shrunk from their own declarations concerning the state of feeling, and opinion at that time predominant throughout Great Britain. There was a time (heaven grant! that that time may have passed by) when by crossing a narrow strait, they might have learnt the true symptoms of approaching danger, and have secured themselves from mistaking the meetings and idle rant of such sedition, as shrunk appalled from the sight of a constable, for the dire murmuring and strange consternation which precedes the storm or earthquake of national discord. Not only in coffee-houses and public theatres, but even at the tables of the wealthy, they would have heard the advocates of existing Government defend their cause in the language and with the tone of men, who are conscious that they are in a minority. But in England, when the alarm was at its highest, there was not a city, no not a town or village, in which a man suspected of holding democratic principles could move abroad without receiving some unpleasant proof of the hatred, in which his supposed opinions were held by



sent from the Treasury.) The rapid and unusual increase in the sale of the Morning Post is a sufficient pledge, that genuine impartiality with a respectable portion of literary talent will secure the success of a newspaper without the aid of party or ministerial patronage. But by impartiality I mean an honest and enlightened

the great majority of the people ; and the only instances of popular excess and indignation were in favor of the Government and the Established Church. But why need I appeal to these invidious facts ? Turn over the pages of history and seek for a single instance of a revolution having been effected without the concurrence of either the nobles, or the ecclesiastics, or the monied classes, in any country, in which the influences of property had ever been predominant, and where the interests of the proprietors were interlinked ! Examine the revolution of the Belgic provinces under Philip 2nd ; the civil wars of France in the preceding generation ; the history of the American revolution, or the yet more recent events in Sweden and in Spain ; and it will be scarcely possible not to perceive, that in England from 1791 to the peace of Amiens there were neither tendencies to confederacy nor actual confederacies, against which the existing laws had not provided sufficient safeguards and an ample punishment. But alas ! the panic of property had been struck in the first instance for party purposes ; and when it became general, its propagators caught it themselves and ended in believing their own lie ; even as our bulls in Borrowdale sometimes run mad with the echo of their own bellowing. The consequences were most injurious. Our attention was concentrated to a monster, which could not survive the convulsions, in which it had been brought forth : even the enlightened Burke himself too often talking and reasoning, as if a perpetual and organized anarchy had been a possible thing ! Thus while we were warring against French doctrines, we took little heed, whether the means, by which we attempted to overthrow them, were not likely to aid and augment the far more formidable evil of French ambition. Like children we ran away from the yelping of a cur, and took shelter at the heels of a vicious war-horse."



adherence to a code of intelligible principles previously announced, and faithfully referred to in support of every judgment on men and events; not indiscriminate abuse, not the indulgence of an editor's own malignant passions, and still less, if that be possible, a determination to make money by flattering the envy and cupidity, the vindictive restlessness and self-conceit of the half-witted vulgar; a determination almost fiendish, but which, I have been informed, has been boastfully avowed by one man, the most notorious of these *mob-sycophants*! From the commencement of the Addington administration to the present day, whatever I have written in the *MORNING POST*, or (after that paper was transferred to other proprietors) in the *COURIER*, has been in defence or furtherance of the measures of Government.

Things of this nature scarce survive the night  
That gives them birth; they perish in the sight,  
Cast by so far from *after-life*, that there  
Can scarcely aught be said, but that *they were*!

CARTWRIGHT'S *Prol. to the Royal Slave.*

Yet in these labors I employed, and in the belief of partial friends wasted, the prime and manhood of my intellect. Most assuredly, they added nothing to my fortune or my repu-



tation. The industry of the week supplied the necessities of the week. From Government or the friends of Government I not only never received remuneration, or ever expected it ; but I was never honoured with a single acknowledgement, or expression of satisfaction. Yet the retrospect is far from painful or matter of regret. I am not indeed silly enough to take, as any thing more than a violent hyperbole of party debate, Mr. Fox's assertion that the *late* war (I trust that the epithet is not prematurely applied) *was a war produced by the MORNING POST* ; or I should be proud to have the words inscribed on my tomb. As little do I regard the circumstance, that I was a specified object of Buonaparte's resentment during my residence in Italy in consequence of those essays in the Morning Post during the peace of Amiens. (Of this I was warned, *directly*, by Baron VON HUMBOLDT, the Prussian Plenipotentiary, who at that time was the minister of the Prussian court at Rome ; and indirectly, through his secretary, by Cardinal Fesch himself.) Nor do I lay any greater weight on the confirming fact, that an order for my arrest was sent from Paris, from which danger I was rescued by the kindness of a noble Benedictine, and the gracious connivance of that good old man, the present Pope. For the late tyrant's vindictive appetite was omnivorous, and preyed equally



on a\* Duc D'Enghien, and the writer of a newspaper paragraph. Like a true† vulture, Napoleon with an eye not less telescopic, and with a taste equally coarse in his ravin, could descend from the most dazzling heights to pounce on the leveret in the brake, or even on the field-mouse amid the grass. But I do derive a gratification from the knowledge, that my essays contributed to introduce the practice of placing the questions and events of the day in a moral point of view ; in giving a dignity to particular measures by tracing their policy or impolicy to permanent principles, and an interest to principles by the application of them to individual measures. In Mr. Burke's writings indeed the germs of almost all political truths may be found. But I dare assume to myself the merit of having first explicitly defined and analyzed the nature of Jacobinism ; and that in distinguishing the jacobin from the republican, the

\* I seldom think of the murder of this illustrious Prince without recollecting the lines of Valerius Flaccus (Argonaut. Lib. I. 30.)

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Super ipsius ingens  
Instat fama viri, virtusque haud læta Tyranno ;  
Ergo ante ire metus, juvenemque extinguere pergit.

† Θηρᾷ δὲ καὶ τοῦ χῆνα καὶ τὴν Δορκάδα,  
Καὶ τοῦ Λαγῶν, καὶ τὸ τῶν Ταύρων γένος.

PHILE *de animal. propriet.*



democrat, and the mere demagogue, I both rescued the word from remaining a mere term of abuse, and put on their guard many honest minds, who even in their heat of zeal against jacobinism, admitted or supported principles from which the worst parts of that system may be legitimately deduced. That these are not necessary *practical* results of such principles, we owe to that fortunate inconsequence of our nature, which permits the heart to rectify the errors of the understanding. The detailed examination of the consular Government and its pretended constitution, and the proof given by me, that it was a consummate despotism in masquerade, extorted a recantation even from the Morning Chronicle, which had previously extolled this constitution as the perfection of a wise and regulated liberty. On every great occurrence I endeavoured to discover in past history the event, that most nearly resembled it. I procured, wherever it was possible, the contemporary historians, memorialists, and pamphleteers. Then fairly substracting the points of difference from those of likeness, as the balance favored the former or the latter, I conjectured that the result would be the same or different. In the series of\* essays entitled "a comparison

\* A small selection from the numerous articles furnished by me to the Morning Post and Courier, chiefly as they re-



of France under Napoleon with Rome under the first Cæsars," and in those which followed "on the probable final restoration of the Bourbons," I feel myself authorized to affirm, by the effect produced on many intelligent men, that were the dates wanting, it might have been suspected that the essays had been written within the last twelve months. The same plan I pursued at the commencement of the Spanish revolution, and with the same success, taking the war of the United Provinces with Philip 2nd, as the ground work of the comparison. I have mentioned this from no motives of vanity, nor even from motives of self-defence, which would justify a certain degree of egotism, especially if it be considered, how often and grossly I have been attacked for sentiments, which I had exerted my best powers to confute and expose, and how grievously these charges acted to my disadvantage while I was in Malta. Or rather they would have done so, if my own feelings had not precluded the wish of a settled

gard the sources and effects of jacobinism and the connection of certain systems of political economy with jacobinical despotism, will form part of "THE FRIEND," which I am now completing, and which will be shortly published, for I can scarcely say republished, with the numbers arranged in Chapters according to their subjects.

Accipe principium rursus, corpusque *coactum*

Desere ; mutata melior procede figura.



establishment in that island. But I have mentioned it from the full persuasion that, armed with the two-fold knowledge of history and the human mind, a man will scarcely err in his judgement concerning the sum total of any future national event, if he have been able to procure the original documents of the past together with authentic accounts of the present, and if he have a philosophic tact for what is truly important in facts, and in most instances therefore for such facts as the DIGNITY OF HISTORY has excluded from the volumes of our modern compilers, by the courtesy of the age entitled historians.

To have lived in vain must be a painful thought to any man, and especially so to him who has made literature his profession. I should therefore rather condole than be angry with the mind, which could attribute to no worthier feelings, than those of vanity or self-love, the satisfaction which I acknowledge to have enjoyed from the republication of my political essays (either whole or as extracts) not only in many of our own provincial papers, but in the federal journals throughout America. I regarded it as some proof of my not having labored altogether in vain, that from the articles written by me shortly before and at the commencement of the late unhappy war with America, not only the sentiments were adopted, but



in some instances the very language, in several of the Massachussets state-papers.

But no one of these motives nor all conjointly would have impelled me to a statement so uncomfortable to my own feelings, had not my character been repeatedly attacked, by an unjustifiable intrusion on private life, as of a man incorrigibly idle, and who intrusted not only with ample talents, but favored with unusual opportunities of improving them, had nevertheless suffered them to rust away without any efficient exertion either for his own good or that of his fellow-creatures. Even if the compositions, which I have made public, and that too in a form the most certain of an extensive circulation, though the least flattering to an author's self-love, had been published in *books*, they would have filled a respectable number of volumes, though every passage of merely temporary interest were omitted. My prose writings have been charged with a disproportionate demand on the attention; with an excess of refinement in the mode of arriving at truths; with beating the ground for that which might have been run down by the eye; with the length and laborious construction of my periods; in short with obscurity and the love of paradox. But my severest critics have not pretended to have found in my compositions triviality, or traces of a mind that shrunk from the toil of



thinking. No one has charged me with tricking out in other words the thoughts of others, or with hashing up anew the crambe jam decies coctam of English literature or philosophy. Seldom have I written that in a day, the acquisition or investigation of which had not cost me the previous labor of a month.

But are books the only channel through which the stream of intellectual usefulness can flow? Is the diffusion of truth to be estimated by publications; or publications by the truth, which they diffuse or at least contain? I speak it in the excusable warmth of a mind stung by an accusation, which has not only been advanced in reviews of the widest circulation, not only registered in the bulkiest works of periodical literature, but by frequency of repetition has become an admitted fact in private literary circles, and thoughtlessly repeated by too many who call themselves my friends, and whose own recollections ought to have suggested a contrary testimony. Would that the criterion of a scholar's utility were the number and moral value of the truths, which he has been the means of throwing into the general circulation; or the number and value of the minds, whom by his conversation or letters, he has excited into activity, and supplied with the germs of their after-growth! A distinguished rank might not indeed, even then, be awarded to my exertions, but I



should dare look forward with confidence to an honorable acquittal. I should dare appeal to the numerous and respectable audiences, which at different times and in different places honored my lecture-rooms with their attendance, whether the points of view from which the subjects treated of were surveyed, whether the grounds of my reasoning were such, as they had heard or read elsewhere, or have since found in previous publications. I can conscientiously declare, that the complete success of the REMORSE on the first night of its representation did not give me as great or as heart-felt a pleasure, as the observation that the pit and boxes were crowded with faces familiar to me, though of individuals whose names I did not know, and of whom I knew nothing, but that they had attended one or other of my courses of lectures. It is an excellent though perhaps somewhat vulgar proverb, that there are cases where a man may be as well "*in for a pound as for a penny.*" To those, who from ignorance of the serious injury I have received from this rumour of having dreamt away my life to no purpose, injuries which I unwillingly remember at all, much less am disposed to record in a sketch of my literary life; or to those, who from their own feelings, or the gratification they derive from thinking contemptuously of others, would like Job's comforters attribute these complaints,



extorted from me by the sense of wrong, to self-conceit or presumptuous vanity, I have already furnished such ample materials, that I shall gain nothing by with-holding the remainder. I will not therefore hesitate to ask the consciences of those, who from their long acquaintance with me and with the circumstances are best qualified to decide or be my judges, whether the restitution of the *sum cuique* would increase or detract from my literary reputation. In this exculpation I hope to be understood as speaking of myself comparatively, and in proportion to the claims, which others are intitled to make on my time or my talents. By what I *have* effected, am I to be judged by my fellow men; what I *could* have done, is a question for my own conscience. On my own account I may perhaps have had sufficient reason to lament my deficiency in self-controul, and the neglect of centering my powers to the realization of some permanent work. But to verse rather than to prose, if to either, belongs the voice of mourning” for

Keen pangs of love awakening as a babe  
 Turbulent, with an outcry in the heart,  
 And fears self-will'd that shunn'd the eye of hope,  
 And hope that scarce would know itself from fear;  
 Sense of past youth, and manhood come in vain  
 And genius given and knowledge won in vain,  
 And all which I had cull'd in wood-walks wild  
 And all which patient toil had rear'd, and all  
 Commune with thee had open'd out—but flowers  
 Strew'd on my corpse, and borne upon my bier  
 In the same coffin, for the self-same grave! S. T. C.



These will exist, for the future, I trust only in  
the poetic strains, which the feelings at the time  
called forth. In those only, gentle reader,

Affectus animi varios, bellumque sequacis  
Perlegis invidiæ ; curasque revolvis inanes ;  
Quas humilis tenero stylus olim effudit in ævo.  
Perlegis et lacrymas, et quod pharetratus acutâ  
Ille puer puero fecit mihi cuspide vulnus.  
OMNIA PAULATIM CONSUMIT LONGIOR ÆTAS  
VIVENDOQUE SIMUL MORIMUR, RAPIMURQUE MANENDO.  
Ipse mihi collatus enim non ille videbor ;  
Frons alia est, moresque alii, nova mentis imago,  
Vox aliudque sonat. Jamque observatio vitæ  
Multa dedit :—lugere nihil, ferre omnia ; jamque  
Paulatim lacrymas rerum experientia tersit.



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CHAPTER XI.

*An affectionate exhortation to those who in early life feel themselves disposed to become authors.*

It was a favorite remark of the late Mr. Whitbread's, that no man does any thing from a single motive. The separate motives, or rather moods of mind, which produced the preceding reflections and anecdotes have been laid open to the reader in each separate instance. But an interest in the welfare of those, who at the present time may be in circumstances not dissimilar to my own at my first entrance into life, has been the constant accompaniment, and (as it were) the under-song of all my feelings. WHITEHEAD exerting the prerogative of his laureatship addressed to youthful poets a poetic CHARGE, which is perhaps the best, and certainly the most interesting, of his works. With no other privilege than that of sympathy and sincere good wishes, I would address an affectionate exhortation to the youthful literati, grounded on my own experience. It will be but short; for the beginning, middle, and end converge to one charge: NEVER PURSUE LITE-



RATURE AS A TRADE. With the exception of one extraordinary man, I have never known an individual, least of all an individual of genius, healthy or happy without a *profession*, i. e. some *regular* employment, which does not depend on the will of the moment, and which can be carried on so far *mechanically* that an average quantum only of health, spirits, and intellectual exertion are requisite to its faithful discharge. Three hours of leisure, unannoyed by any alien anxiety, and looked forward to with delight as a change and recreation, will suffice to realize in literature a larger product of what is truly *genial*, than weeks of compulsion. Money, and immediate reputation form only an arbitrary and accidental end of literary labor. The *hope* of increasing them by any given exertion will often prove a stimulant to industry ; but the *necessity* of acquiring them will in all works of genius convert the stimulant into a *narcotic*. Motives by excess reverse their very nature, and instead of exciting, stun and stupify the mind. For it is one contradiction of genius from talent, that its predominant end is always comprized in the means ; and this is one of the many points, which establish an analogy between genius and virtue. Now though talents may exist without genius, yet as genius cannot exist, certainly not manifest itself, without talents, I would



advise every scholar, who feels the genial power working within him, so far to make a division between the two, as that he should devote his *talents* to the acquirement of competence in some known trade or profession, and his genius to objects of his tranquil and unbiassed choice; while the consciousness of being actuated in both alike by the sincere desire to perform his duty, will alike ennoble both. My dear young friend (I would say) “suppose yourself established in any honourable occupation. From the manufactory or counting-house, from the law-court, or from having visited your last patient, you return at evening,

“Dear tranquil time, when the sweet sense of home  
Is sweetest —”

to your family, prepared for its social enjoyments, with the very countenances of your wife and children brightened, and their voice of welcome made doubly welcome, by the knowledge that, as far as *they* are concerned, you have satisfied the demands of the day by the labor of the day. Then, when you retire into your study, in the books on your shelves you revisit so many venerable friends with whom you can converse. Your own spirit scarcely less free from personal anxieties than the great minds, that in those books are still living for you! Even your writing desk with its blank paper and all its other implements will appear as a



chain of flowers, capable of linking your feelings as well as thoughts to events and characters past or to come ; not a chain of iron which binds you down to think of the future and the remote by recalling the claims and feelings of the peremptory present. But why should I say *retire* ? The habits of active life and daily intercourse with the stir of the world will tend to give you such self-command, that the presence of your family will be no interruption. Nay, the social silence, or undisturbing voices of a wife or sister will be like a restorative atmosphere, or soft music which moulds a dream without becoming its object. If facts are required to prove the possibility of combining weighty performances in literature with full and independent employment, the works of Cicero and Xenophon among the ancients ; of Sir Thomas Moore, Bacon, Baxter, or to refer at once to later and cotemporary instances, DARWIN and ROSCOE, are at once decisive of the question.

But all men may not dare promise themselves a sufficiency of self-controul for the imitation of those examples ; though strict scrutiny should always be made, whether indolence, restlessness, or a vanity impatient for immediate gratification, have not tampered with the judgement and assumed the vizard of humility for the purposes of self-delusion. Still the church



presents to every man of learning and genius a profession, in which he may cherish a rational hope of being able to unite the widest schemes of literary utility with the strictest performance of professional duties. Among the numerous blessings of christianity, the introduction of an established church makes an especial claim on the gratitude of scholars and philosophers ; in England, at least, where the principles of Protestantism have conspired with the freedom of the government to double all its salutary powers by the removal of its abuses.

That not only the maxims, but the grounds of a pure morality, the mere fragments of which

“ — the lofty grave tragedians taught  
In chorus or iambic, teachers best  
Of moral prudence, with delight received  
In brief sententious precepts ;”

#### PARADISE REGAINED.

and that the sublime truths of the divine unity and attributes, which a Plato found most hard to learn and deemed it still more difficult to reveal ; that these should have become the almost hereditary property of childhood and poverty, of the hovel and the workshop ; that even to the unlettered they sound as *common place*, is a phenomenon, which must withhold all but minds of the most vulgar cast from undervaluing the services even of the pulpit and the reading desk. Yet those, who confine



the efficiency of an established church to its *public* offices, can hardly be placed in a much higher rank of intellect. That to every parish throughout the kingdom there is transplanted a germ of civilization ; that in the remotest villages there is a nucleus, round which the capabilities of the place may crystallize and brighten ; a model sufficiently superior to excite, yet sufficiently near to encourage and facilitate, imitation ; *this*, the inobtrusive, continuous agency of a protestant church establishment, *this* it is, which the patriot, and the philanthropist, who would fain unite the love of peace with the faith in the progressive amelioration of mankind, cannot estimate at too high a price. “It cannot be valued with the gold of Ophir, with the precious onyx, or the sapphire. No mention shall be made of coral or of pearls ; for the price of wisdom is above rubies.” The clergyman is with his parishioners and among them ; he is neither in the cloistered cell, or in the wilderness, but a neighbour and a family-man, whose education and rank admit him to the mansion of the rich landholder, while his duties make him the frequent visitor of the farm-house and the cottage. He is, or he may become, connected with the families of his parish or its vicinity by marriage. And among the instances of the blindness, or at best of the short-sightedness,



which it is the nature of cupidity to inflict, I know few more striking, than the clamors of the farmers against church property. Whatever was not paid to the clergyman would inevitably at the next lease be paid to the landholder, while, as the case at present stands, the revenues of the church are in some sort the reversionary property of every family, that may have a member educated for the church, or a daughter that may marry a clergyman. Instead of being *foreclosed* and immovable, it is in fact the only species of landed property, that is essentially moving and circulative. That there exist no inconveniences, who will pretend to assert? But I have yet to expect the proof, that the inconveniences are greater in this than in any other species ; or that either the farmers or the clergy would be benefited by forcing the latter to become either *Trullibers*, or salaried *placemen*. Nay, I do not hesitate to declare my firm persuasion, that whatever *reason* of discontent the farmers may assign, the true *cause* is this ; that they may cheat the *parson*, but cannot cheat the steward ; and they are disappointed, if they should have been able to withhold only two pounds less than the legal claim, having expected to withhold five. At all events, considered relatively to the encouragement of learning and genius, the establishment presents a patronage at once so effec-



tive and unburthensome, that it would be impossible to afford the like or equal in any but a christian and protestant country. There is scarce a department of human knowledge without some bearing on the various critical, historical, philosophical, and moral truths, in which the scholar must be interested as a clergyman; no one pursuit worthy of a man of genius, which may not be followed without incongruity. To give the history of the bible as a *book*, would be little less than to relate the origin or first excitement of all the literature and science, that we now possess. The very decorum, which the profession imposes, is favorable to the best purposes of genius, and tends to counteract its most frequent defects. Finally, that man must be deficient in sensibility, who would not find an incentive to emulation in the great and burning lights, which in a long series have illustrated the church of England; who would not hear from within an echo to the voice from their sacred shrines,

“Et Pater Æneas et avunculus excitat Hector.”

But whatever be the profession or trade chosen, the advantages are many and important, compared with the state of a *mere* literary man, who in any degree depends on the sale of his works for the necessaries and comforts of life. In the former a man lives in sympathy with the world, in which he lives. At least he



acquires a better and quicker tact for the knowledge of that, with which men in general can sympathize. He learns to manage his genius more prudently and efficaciously. His powers and acquirements gain him likewise more real admiration; for they surpass the legitimate expectations of others. He is something besides an author, and is not therefore considered merely as an author. The hearts of men are open to him, as to one of their own class; and whether he exerts himself or not in the conversational circles of his acquaintance, his silence is not attributed to pride, nor his communicativeness to vanity. To these advantages I will venture to add a superior chance of happiness in domestic life, were it only that it is as natural for the man to be out of the circle of his household during the day, as it is meritorious for the woman to remain for the most part within it. But this subject involves points of consideration so numerous and so delicate, and would not only permit, but require such ample documents from the biography of literary men, that I now merely allude to it *in transitu*. When the same circumstance has occurred at very different times to very different persons, all of whom have some one thing in common; there is reason to suppose that such circumstance is not merely attributable to the *persons* concerned, but is in some measure occasioned



by the one point in common to them all. Instead of the vehement and almost slanderous dehortation from marriage, which the *Misogyne*, Boccaccio (*Vita e Costumi di Dante*, p. 12, 16) addresses to literary men, I would substitute the simple advice: be not *merely* a man of letters! Let literature be an honourable *augmentation* to your arms; but not constitute the coat, or fill the escutcheon!

To objections from conscience I can of course answer in no other way, than by requesting the youthful objector (as I have already done on a former occasion) to ascertain with strict self-examination, whether other influences may not be at work; whether spirits, "*not of health*," and with whispers "*not from heaven*," may not be walking in the *twilight* of his consciousness. Let him catalogue his scruples, and reduce them to a distinct intelligible form; let him be certain, that he has read with a docile mind and favorable dispositions the best and most fundamental works on the subject; that he has had both mind and heart opened to the great and illustrious qualities of the many renowned characters, who had doubted like himself, and whose researches had ended in the clear conviction, that their doubts had been groundless, or at least in no proportion to the counter-weight. Happy will it be for such a man, if among his contemporaries elder than himself he should meet with one, who with



similar powers, and feelings as acute as his own, had entertained the same scruples ; had acted upon them ; and who by after-research (when the step was, alas ! irretrievable, but for that very reason his research undeniably disinterested) had discovered himself to have quarrelled with received opinions only to embrace errors, to have left the direction tracked out for him on the high road of honorable exertion, only to deviate into a labyrinth, where when he had wandered, till his head was giddy, his best good fortune was finally to have found his way out again, too late for prudence though not too late for conscience or for truth ! Time spent in such delay is time won ; for manhood in the mean time is advancing, and with it increase of knowledge, strength of judgement, and above all, temperance of feelings. And even if these should effect no change, yet the delay will at least prevent the final approval of the decision from being alloyed by the inward censure of the rashness and vanity, by which it had been precipitated. It would be a sort of irreligion, and scarcely less than a libel on human nature to believe, that there is any established and reputable profession or employment, in which a man may not continue to act with honesty and honor ; and doubtless there is likewise none, which may not at times present temptations to the contrary. But woefully will that man find himself mistaken, who imagines that



the profession of literature, or (to speak more plainly) the *trade* of authorship, besets its members with fewer or with less insidious temptations, than the church, the law, or the different branches of commerce. But I have treated sufficiently on this unpleasant subject in an early chapter of this volume. I will conclude the present therefore with a short extract from HERDER, whose name I might have added to the illustrious list of those, who have combined the successful pursuit of the muses, not only with the faithful discharge, but with the highest honors and honorable emoluments, of an established profession. The translation the reader will find in a note below.\*

“ Am sorgfältigsten, meiden sie die Autorschaft. Zu früh oder anmässig gebraucht, macht sie den Kopf wüste und das Herz leer ; wenn sie auch sonst keine üble Folgen gäbe. Ein Mensch, der nur lieset um zu drücken, lieset wahrscheinlich übel ; und wer jeden Gedanken, der ihm aufstosst, durch Feder und Presse

\* TRANSLATION.

“ With the greatest possible solicitude avoid authorship. Too early or immoderately employed, it makes the head *waste* and the heart empty ; even were there no other worse consequences. A person, who reads only to print, in all probability reads amiss ; and he, who sends away through the pen and the press every thought, the moment it occurs



versendet, hat sie in kurzer Zeit alle versandt, und wird bald ein blosser Diener der Druckerey, ein Buchstabensetzer werden.

HERDER.

to him, will in a short time have sent all away, and will become a mere journeyman of the printing-office, a *compositor*."

To which I may add from myself, that what medical physiologists affirm of certain secretions, applies equally to our thoughts; they too must be taken up again into the circulation, and be again and again re-secreted in order to ensure a healthful vigor, both to the mind and to its intellectual offspring.



## CHAPTER XII.

*A Chapter of requests and premonitions concerning the perusal or omission of the chapter that follows.*

In the perusal of philosophical works I have been greatly benefited by a resolve, which, in the antithetic form and with the allowed quaintness of an adage or maxim, I have been accustomed to word thus : “ *until you understand a writer's ignorance, presume yourself ignorant of his understanding.*” This golden rule of mine does, I own, resemble those of Pythagoras in its obscurity rather than in its depth. If however the reader will permit me to be my own Hierocles, I trust, that he will find its meaning fully explained by the following instances. I have now before me a treatise of a religious fanatic, full of dreams and supernatural *experiences*. I see clearly the writer's grounds, and their hollowness. I have a complete insight into the causes, which through the medium of his body had acted on his mind ; and by application of received and ascertained laws I can satisfactorily explain to my own reason all



the strange incidents, which the writer records of himself. And this I can do without suspecting him of any intentional falsehood. As when in broad day-light a man tracks the steps of a traveller, who had lost his way in a fog or by treacherous moonshine, even so, and with the same tranquil sense of certainty, can I follow the traces of this bewildered visionary. I UNDERSTAND HIS IGNORANCE.

On the other hand, I have been re-perusing with the best energies of my mind the *Timæus* of PLATO. Whatever I comprehend, impresses me with a reverential sense of the author's genius; but there is a considerable portion of the work, to which I can attach no consistent meaning. In other treatises of the same philosopher intended for the average comprehensions of men, I have been delighted with the masterly good sense, with the perspicuity of the language, and the aptness of the inductions. I recollect likewise, that numerous passages in this author, which I thoroughly comprehend, were formerly no less unintelligible to me, than the passages now in question. It would, I am aware, be quite *fashionable* to dismiss them at once as Platonic Jargon. But this I cannot do with satisfaction to my own mind, because I have sought in vain for causes adequate to the solution of the assumed inconsistency. I have no insight into the possibility of a man so



eminently wise, using words with such half-meanings to himself, as must perforce pass into no-meaning to his readers. When in addition to the motives thus suggested by my own reason, I bring into distinct remembrance the number and the series of great men, who after long and zealous study of these works had joined in honoring the name of PLATO with epithets, that almost transcend humanity, I feel, that a contemptuous verdict on my part might argue want of modesty, but would hardly be received by the judicious, as evidence of superior penetration. Therefore, utterly baffled in all my attempts to understand the ignorance of Plato, I CONCLUDE MYSELF IGNORANT OF HIS UNDERSTANDING.

In lieu of the various requests which the anxiety of authorship addresses to the unknown reader, I advance but this one ; that he will either pass over the following chapter altogether, or read the whole connectedly. The fairest part of the most beautiful body will appear deformed and monstrous, if dissevered from its place in the organic Whole. Nay, on delicate subjects, where a seemingly trifling difference of more or less may constitute a difference in *kind*, even a *faithful* display of the main and supporting ideas, if yet they are separated from the forms by which they are at once cloathed and modified, may perchance



present a skeleton indeed ; but a skeleton to alarm and deter. Though I might find numerous precedents, I shall not desire the reader to strip his mind of all prejudices, or to keep all prior systems out of view during his examination of the present. For in truth, such requests appear to me not much unlike the advice given to hypochondriacal patients in Dr. Buchan's domestic medicine ; videlicet, to preserve themselves uniformly tranquil and in good spirits. Till I had discovered the art of destroying the memory *a parte post*, without injury to its future operations, and without detriment to the judgement, I should suppress the request as premature ; and therefore, however much I may *wish* to be read with an unprejudiced mind, I do not presume to state it as a necessary condition.

The extent of my daring is to suggest one criterion, by which it may be rationally conjectured before-hand, whether or no a reader would lose his time, and perhaps his temper, in the perusal of this, or any other treatise constructed on similar principles. But it would be cruelly misinterpreted, as implying the least disrespect either for the moral or intellectual qualities of the individuals thereby precluded. The criterion is this : if a man receives as fundamental facts, and therefore of course indemonstrable and incapable of further analysis,



the general notions of matter, spirit, soul, body, action, passiveness, time, space, cause and effect, consciousness, perception, memory and habit ; if he feels his mind completely at rest concerning all these, and is satisfied, if only he can analyse all other notions into some one or more of these supposed elements with plausible subordination and apt arrangement : to such a mind I would as courteously as possible convey the hint, that for him the chapter was not written.

Vir bonus es, doctus, prudens ; ast *haud tibi spiro*.

For these terms do in truth *include* all the difficulties, which the human mind can propose for solution. Taking them therefore in mass, and unexamined, it requires only a decent apprenticeship in logic, to draw forth their contents in all forms and colours, as the professors of legerdemain at our village fairs pull out ribbon after ribbon from their mouths. And not more difficult is it to reduce them back again to their different genera. But though this analysis is highly useful in rendering our knowledge more distinct, it does not really add to it. It does not increase, though it gives us a greater mastery over, the wealth which we before possessed. For forensic purposes, for all the established professions of society, this is sufficient. But for philosophy in its highest sense, as the science of ultimate truths, and



therefore scientia scientiarum, this mere analysis of terms is preparative only, though as a preparative discipline indispensable.

Still less dare a favorable perusal be anticipated from the proselytes of that compendious philosophy, which talking of mind but thinking of brick and mortar, or other images equally abstracted from body, contrives a theory of spirit by nicknaming matter, and in a few hours can qualify its dullest disciples to explain the omne scibile by reducing all things to impressions, ideas, and sensations.

But it is time to tell the truth ; though it requires some courage to avow it in an age and country, in which disquisitions on all subjects, not privileged to adopt technical terms or scientific symbols, must be addressed to the PUBLIC. I say then, that it is neither possible or necessary for all men, or for many, to be PHILOSOPHERS. There is a *philosophic* (and inasmuch as it is actualized by an effort of freedom, an *artificial*) *consciousness*, which lies beneath or (as it were) *behind* the spontaneous consciousness natural to all reflecting beings. As the elder Romans distinguished their northern provinces into Cis-Alpine and Trans-Alpine, so may we divide all the objects of human knowledge into those on this side, and those on the other side of the spontaneous consciousness ; *citra et trans conscientiam communem*.



The latter is exclusively the domain of PURE philosophy, which is therefore properly entitled *transcendental*, in order to discriminate it at once, both from mere reflection and representation on the one hand, and on the other from those flights of lawless speculation which abandoned by *all* distinct consciousness, because transgressing the bounds and purposes of our intellectual faculties, are justly condemned, as\* *transcendent*. The first range of

\*This distinction between transcendental and transcendent is observed by our elder divines and philosophers, whenever they express themselves *scholastically*. Dr. Johnson indeed has confounded the two words; but his own authorities do not bear him out. Of this celebrated dictionary I will venture to remark once for all, that I should suspect the man of a morose disposition who should speak of it without respect and gratitude as a most instructive and entertaining *book*, and hitherto, unfortunately, an indispensable book; but I confess, that I should be surprized at hearing from a philosophic and thorough scholar any but very qualified praises of it, as a *dictionary*. I am not now alluding to the number of genuine words omitted; for this is (and perhaps to a greater extent) true, as Mr. Wakefield has noticed, of our best Greek Lexicons, and this too after the successive labors of so many giants in learning. I refer at present both to omissions and commissions of a more important nature. What these are, me saltem judice, will be stated at full in THE FRIEND, re-published and completed.

I had never heard of the correspondence between Wakefield and Fox till I saw the account of it this morning (16th September 1815) in the Monthly Review. I was not a little gratified at finding, that Mr. Wakefield had proposed to himself nearly the same plan for a Greek and English Dictionary, which I had formed, and began to execute, now ten years ago. But far, far more grieved am I, that he did not live to compleat it. I cannot but think it a subject of most serious regret, that the same heavy expenditure, which is now em-



hills, that encircles the scanty vale of human life, is the horizon for the majority of its inhabitants. On *its* ridges the common sun is born and departs. From *them* the stars rise, and touching *them* they vanish. By the many, even this range, the natural limit and bulwark of the vale, is but imperfectly known. Its higher ascents are too often hidden by mists and clouds from uncultivated swamps, which few have courage or curiosity to penetrate. To the multitude below these vapors appear, now

employing in the *republication* of STEPHANUS augmented, had not been applied to a new Lexicon on a more philosophical plan, with the English, German, and French Synonimes as well as the Latin. In almost every instance the precise *individual* meaning might be given in an English or German word; whereas in Latin we must too often be contented with a mere general and *inclusive* term. How indeed can it be otherwise, when we attempt to render the most copious language of the world, the most admirable for the fineness of its distinctions, into one of the poorest and most vague languages? Especially, when we reflect on the comparative number of the works, still extant, written, while the Greek and Latin were living languages. Were I asked, what I deemed the greatest and most unmixt benefit, which a wealthy individual, or an association of wealthy individuals could bestow on their country and on mankind, I should not hesitate to answer, "a philosophical English dictionary; with the Greek, Latin, German, French, Spanish and Italian synonimes, and with correspondent indexes." That the learned languages might thereby be acquired, better, in half the time, is but a part, and not the most important part, of the advantages which would accrue from such a work. O! if it should be permitted by providence, that without detriment to freedom and independence our government might be enabled to become more than a committee for war and revenue! There was a time, when every thing was to be done by government. Have we not flown off to the contrary extreme?



as the dark haunts of terrific agents, on which none may intrude with impunity; and now all *a-glow*, with colors not their own, they are gazed at, as the splendid palaces of happiness and power. But in all ages there have been a few, who measuring and sounding the rivers of the vale at the feet of their furthest inaccessible falls have learnt, that the sources must be far higher and far inward; a few, who even in the level streams have detected elements, which neither the vale itself or the surrounding mountains contained or could supply. How and whence to these thoughts, these strong probabilities, the ascertaining vision, the intuitive knowledge, may finally supervene, can be learnt only by the fact. I might oppose to the question the words with which \* Plotinus supposes NATURE to

\* Ennead iii. l. 8. c. 3. The force of the Greek *συνιέναι* is imperfectly expressed by "understand;" our own idiomatic phrase "*to go along with me*" comes nearest to it. The passage, that follows, full of profound sense, appears to me evidently corrupt; and in fact no writer more wants, better deserves, or is less likely to obtain, a new and more correct edition.—τὸ ἔν συνιέναι; ὅτι τὸ γενόμενον ἐστὶ δέαμα ἐμὸν, σιωπησίς (*mallem, δέαμα, ἐμὸν σιωπησῆς,*) καὶ φύσει γενομένον θεώρημα καὶ μοι γενομένη ἐκ θεωρίας τῆς ὠδῆς, τὴν φύσιν ἔχει φιλοθεάμονα υπαρκει. (*mallem, καὶ μοι ἢ γενομένη ἐκ θεωρίας αὐτῆς ὠδῆς*). "what then are we to understand? That whatever is produced is an intuition, I silent; and that, which is thus generated, is by its nature a theorem, or form of contemplation; and the birth, which results to me from this contemplation, attains to have a contemplative nature." So Synesius; *Ὡδὶς ἰσα, Αἰσθητὰ Γονδ*. The after comparison of the process of the *natura naturans* with that of the geometrician is drawn from the very heart of philosophy.



answer a similar difficulty. "Should any one interrogate her, how she works, if graciously she vouchsafe to listen and speak, she will reply, it behoves thee not to disquiet me with interrogatories, but to understand in silence, even as I am silent, and work without words."

Likewise in the fifth book of the fifth Ennead, speaking of the highest and intuitive knowledge as distinguished from the discursive, or in the language of Wordsworth,

"The vision and the faculty divine ;"

he says : "it is not lawful to enquire from whence it sprang, as if it were a thing subject to place and motion, for it neither approached hither, nor again departs from hence to some other place ; but it either appears to us or it does not appear. So that we ought not to pursue it with a view of detecting its secret source, but to watch in quiet till it suddenly shines upon us ; preparing ourselves for the blessed spectacle as the eye waits patiently for the rising sun." They and they only can acquire the philosophic imagination, the sacred power of self-intuition, who within themselves can interpret and understand the symbol, that the wings of the air-sylph are forming within the skin of the caterpillar ; those only, who feel in their own spirits the same instinct, which impels the chrysalis of the horned fly to leave



room in its involucrum for antennæ yet to come. They know and feel, that the *potential* works *in* them, even as the *actual* works on them! In short, all the organs of sense are framed for a corresponding world of sense; and we have it. All the organs of spirit are framed for a correspondent world of spirit: tho' the latter organs are not developed in all alike. But they exist in all, and their first appearance discloses itself in the *moral* being. How else could it be, that even worldlings, not wholly debased, will contemplate the man of simple and disinterested goodness with contradictory feelings of pity and respect? "Poor man! he is not made for *this* world." Oh! herein they utter a prophecy of universal fulfilment; for man *must* either rise or sink.

It is the essential mark of the true philosopher to rest satisfied with no imperfect light, as long as the impossibility of attaining a fuller knowledge has not been demonstrated. That the common consciousness itself will furnish proofs by its own direction, that it is connected with master-currents below the surface, I shall merely assume as a postulate pro tempore. This having been granted, though but in expectation of the argument, I can safely deduce from it the equal truth of my former assertion, that philosophy cannot be intelligible to all, even of the most learned and cultivated classes.



A system, the first principle of which it is to render the mind intuitive of the *spiritual* in man (i. e. of that which lies *on the other side* of our natural consciousness) must needs have a great obscurity for those, who have never disciplined and strengthened this ulterior consciousness. It must in truth be a land of darkness, a perfect *Anti-Goshen*, for men to whom the noblest treasures of their own being are reported only through the imperfect translation of lifeless and sightless *notions*. Perhaps, in great part, through words which are but the shadows of notions; even as the notional understanding itself is but the shadowy abstraction of living and actual truth. On the IMMEDIATE, which dwells in every man, and on the original intuition, or absolute affirmation of it, (which is likewise in every man, but does not in every man rise into consciousness) all the *certainty* of our knowledge depends; and this becomes intelligible to no man by the ministry of mere words from without. The medium, by which spirits understand each other, is not the surrounding air; but the *freedom* which they possess in common, as the common ethereal element of their being, the tremulous reciprocations of which propagate themselves even to the inmost of the soul. Where the spirit of a man is not *filled* with the consciousness of freedom (were it only from



its restlessness, as of one still struggling in bondage) all spiritual intercourse is interrupted, not only with others, but even with himself. No wonder then, that he remains incomprehensible to himself as well as to others. No wonder, that in the fearful desert of his consciousness, he wearies himself out with empty words, to which no friendly echo answers, either from his own heart, or the heart of a fellow being ; or bewilders himself in the pursuit of *notional* phantoms, the mere refractions from unseen and distant truths through the distorting medium of his own unenlivened and stagnant understanding ! To remain unintelligible to such a mind, exclaims Schelling on a like occasion, is honor and a good name before God and man.

The history of philosophy (the same writer observes) contains instances of systems, which for successive generations have remained enigmatic. Such he deems the system of Leibnitz, whom another writer (rashly I think, and invidiously) extols as the *only* philosopher, who was himself deeply convinced of his own doctrines. As hitherto interpreted, however, they have not produced the effect, which Leibnitz himself, in a most instructive passage, describes as the criterion of a true philosophy ; namely, that it would at once explain and collect the fragments of truth scattered through systems apparently the most incongruous. The truth,



says he, is diffused more widely than is commonly believed; but it is often painted, yet oftener masked, and is sometimes mutilated and sometimes, alas! in close alliance with mischievous errors. The deeper, however, we penetrate into the ground of things, the more truth we discover in the doctrines of the greater number of the philosophical sects. The want of *substantial* reality in the objects of the senses, according to the sceptics; the harmonies or numbers, the prototypes and ideas, to which the Pythagoreans and Platonists reduced all things; the ONE and ALL of Parmenides and Plotinus, without\* Spinozism; the necessary connection of things according to the Stoics, reconcileable with the spontaneity of the other schools; the vital-philosophy of the Cabalists and Hermetists, who assumed the universality of sensation; the substantial forms and entelechies of Aristotle and the schoolmen, together with the mechanical solution of all particular

\* This is happily effected in three lines by SYNESIUS, in his Fourth Hymn:

Εν καὶ Πάντα—(taken by itself) is *Spinosism*.

Εν δ' Ἀπάντων—a mere *anima Mundi*.

Εν τε πρό πάντων—is mechanical Theism.

But unite all three, and the result is the Theism of Saint Paul and Christianity.

Synesius was censured for his doctrine of the Pre-existence of the Soul; but never, that I can find, arraigned or



phenomena according to Democritus and the recent philosophers—all these we shall find united in one perspective central point, which shows regularity and a coincidence of all the parts in the very object, which from every other point of view must appear confused and distorted. The spirit of sectarianism has been hitherto our fault, and the cause of our failures. We have imprisoned our own conceptions by

deemed heretical for his Pantheism, tho' neither Giordano Bruno, or Jacob Behmen ever avowed it more broadly.

Μύσας δὲ Νόος,  
 Τά τε καὶ τὰ λέγει,  
 Βύθον ἄρρητον  
 Ἀμφιχορεύων.  
 Σὺ τὸ τίκτον ἔφυς,  
 Σὺ τὸ τικτόμενον·  
 Σὺ τὸ φωτίζιον,  
 Σὺ τὸ λαμπρόμενον·  
 Σὺ τὸ φαινόμενον,  
 Σὺ τὸ κρυπτόμενον  
 Ἰδίαις ἀυγαῖς.  
 Ἐν καὶ παντα,  
 Ἐν καθ' ἑαυτο,  
 Καὶ διὰ πάντων·

Pantheism is therefore not necessarily irreligious or heretical; tho' it may be taught atheistically. Thus Spinoza would agree with Synesius in calling God Φυσις ἐν Νοεροις, the *Nature* in Intelligences; but he could not subscribe to the preceding Νόυς καὶ Νοερος, *i. e.* Himself Intelligence and intelligent.

In this biographical sketch of my literary life I may be excused, if I mention here, that I had translated the eight Hymns of Synesius from the Greek into English Anacreontics before my 15th year.



the lines, which we have drawn, in order to exclude the conceptions of others. *J'ai trouvé que la plupart des sectes ont raison dans une bonne partie de ce qu'elles avancent, mais non pas tant en ce qu'elles nient.*

A system, which aims to deduce the memory with all the other functions of intelligence, must of course place its first position from beyond the memory, and anterior to it, otherwise the principle of solution would be itself a part of the problem to be solved. Such a position therefore must, in the first instance be demanded, and the first question will be, by what right is it demanded? On this account I think it expedient to make some preliminary remarks on the introduction of POSTULATES in philosophy. The word postulate is borrowed from the science of mathematics. (See Schell. *abhandl. zur Erläuter. des id. der Wissenschaftslehre*). In geometry the primary construction is not demonstrated, but postulated. This first and most simple construction in space is the point in motion, or the line. Whether the point is moved in one and the same direction, or whether its direction is continually changed, remains as yet undetermined. But if the direction of the point have been determined, it is either by a point without it, and then there arises the strait line which incloses no space; or the direction of the point is not determined



by a point without it, and then it must flow back again on itself, that is, there arises a cyclical line, which does inclose a space. If the strait line be assumed as the positive, the cyclical is then the negation of the strait. It is a line, which at no point strikes out into the strait, but changes its direction continuously. But if the primary line be conceived as undetermined, and the strait line as determined throughout, then the cyclical is the third compounded of both. It is at once undetermined and determined; undetermined through any point without, and determined through itself. Geometry therefore supplies philosophy with the example of a primary intuition, from which every science that lays claim to *evidence* must take its commencement. The mathematician does not begin with a demonstrable proposition, but with an intuition, a practical idea.

But here an important distinction presents itself. Philosophy is employed on objects of the INNER SENSE, and cannot, like geometry appropriate to every construction a correspondent *outward* intuition. Nevertheless philosophy, if it is to arrive at evidence, must proceed from the most original construction, and the question then is, what is the most original construction or first productive act for the INNER SENSE. The answer to this question depends on the direction which is given to the



INNER SENSE. But in philosophy the INNER SENSE cannot have its direction determined by any outward object. To the original construction of the line, I can be compelled by a line drawn before me on the slate or on sand. The stroke thus drawn is indeed not the line itself, but only the image or picture of the line. It is not from it, that we first learn to know the line; but, on the contrary, we bring this stroke to the original line generated by the act of the imagination; otherwise we could not define it as without breadth or thickness. Still however this stroke is the sensuous image of the original or ideal line, and an efficient mean to excite *every* imagination to the intuition of it.

It is demanded then, whether there be found any means in philosophy to determine the direction of the INNER SENSE, as in mathematics it is determinable by its specific image or outward picture. Now the inner sense has its direction determined for the greater part only by an act of freedom. One man's consciousness extends only to the pleasant or unpleasant sensations caused in him by external impressions; another enlarges his inner sense to a consciousness of forms and quantity; a third in addition to the image is conscious of the conception or notion of the thing; a fourth attains to a notion of his notions—he reflects on his own reflections; and thus we may say



without impropriety, that the one possesses more or less inner sense, than the other. This more or less betrays already, that philosophy in its first principles must have a practical or moral, as well as a theoretical or speculative side. This difference in degree does not exist in the mathematics. Socrates in Plato shows, that an ignorant slave may be brought to understand and of himself to solve the most difficult geometrical problem. Socrates drew the figures for the slave in the sand. The disciples of the critical philosophy could likewise (as was indeed actually done by La Forge and some other followers of Des Cartes) represent the origin of our representations in copper-plates ; but no one has yet attempted it, and it would be utterly useless. To an Esquimaux or New Zealander our most popular philosophy would be wholly unintelligible. The sense, the inward organ, for it is not yet born in him. So is there many a one among us, yes, and some who think themselves philosophers too, to whom the philosophic organ is entirely wanting. To such a man, philosophy is a mere play of words and notions, like a theory of music to the deaf, or like the geometry of light to the blind. The connection of the parts and their logical dependencies may be seen and remembered ; but the whole is groundless and hollow, unsustained by living contact, un-



accompanied with any realizing intuition which exists by and in the act that affirms its existence, which is known, because it is, and is, because it is known. The words of Plotinus, in the assumed person of nature, hold true of the philosophic energy. Ἰὸ θεωρῶν μὲ θεωρήμα ποιῶν, ὥσπερ αἱ Γεωμετρῶν θεωροῦντες γράφουσιν. ἀλλ' ἐμὲ μὴ γραφῆσης, θεωρήσης δὲ, ὑφίστανται αἱ τῶν σωμάτων γράμμαι. With me the act of contemplation makes the thing contemplated, as the geometricians contemplating describe lines correspondent; but I not describing lines, but simply contemplating, the representative forms of things rise up into existence.

The postulate of philosophy and at the same time the test of philosophic capacity, is no other than the heaven-descended KNOW THYSELF! (*E cælo descendit*, Γνωθὶ σεαυτὸν). And this at once practically and speculatively. For as philosophy is neither a science of the reason or understanding only, nor merely a science of morals, but the science of BEING altogether, its primary ground can be neither merely speculative or merely practical, but both in one. All knowledge rests on the coincidence of an object with a subject. (My readers have been warned in a former chapter that for their convenience as well as the writer's, the term, subject is used by me in its scholastic sense as equivalent to mind or sentient being, and as



the necessary correlative of object or *quicquid obicitur menti*.) For we can *know* that only which is true: and the truth is universally placed in the coincidence of the thought with the thing, of the representation with the object represented.

Now the sum of all that is merely OBJECTIVE, we will henceforth call NATURE, confining the term to its passive and material sense, as comprising all the phænomena by which its existence is made known to us. On the other hand the sum of all that is SUBJECTIVE, we may comprehend in the name of the SELF or INTELLIGENCE. Both conceptions are in necessary antithesis. Intelligence is conceived of as exclusively representative, nature as exclusively represented; the one as conscious, the other as without consciousness. Now in all acts of positive knowledge there is required a reciprocal concurrence of both, namely of the conscious being, and of that which is in itself unconscious. Our problem is to explain this concurrence, its possibility and its necessity.

During the act of knowledge itself, the objective and subjective are so instantly united, that we cannot determine to which of the two the priority belongs. There is here no first, and no second; both are coinstantaneous and one. While I am attempting to explain this intimate coalition, I must suppose it dissolved.



I must necessarily set out from the one, to which therefore I give hypothetical antecedence, in order to arrive at the other. But as there are but two factors or elements in the problem, subject and object, and as it is left indeterminate from which of them I should commence, there are two cases equally possible.

1. EITHER THE OBJECTIVE IS TAKEN AS THE FIRST, AND THEN WE HAVE TO ACCOUNT FOR THE SUPERVENTION OF THE SUBJECTIVE, WHICH COALESCES WITH IT.

The notion of the subjective is not contained in the notion of the objective. On the contrary they mutually exclude each other. The subjective therefore must supervene to the objective. The conception of nature does not apparently involve the co-presence of an intelligence making an ideal duplicate of it, i. e. representing it. This desk for instance would (according to our natural notions) be, though there should exist no sentient being to look at it. This then is the problem of natural philosophy. It assumes the objective or unconscious nature as the first, and has therefore to explain how intelligence can supervene to it, or how itself can grow into intelligence. If it should appear, that all enlightened naturalists without having distinctly proposed the problem to themselves have yet constantly moved in the line of its solution, it must afford a strong pre-



sumption that the problem itself is founded in nature. For if all knowledge has as it were two poles reciprocally required and presupposed, all sciences must proceed from the one or the other, and must tend toward the opposite as far as the equatorial point in which both are reconciled and become identical. The necessary tendence therefore of all natural philosophy is from nature to intelligence ; and this, and no other is the true ground and occasion of the instinctive striving to introduce theory into our views of natural phænomena. The highest perfection of natural philosophy would consist in the perfect spiritualization of all the laws of nature into laws of intuition and intellect. The phænomena (*the material*) must wholly disappear, and the laws alone (*the formal*) must remain. Thence it comes, that in nature itself the more the principle of law breaks forth, the more does the *husk* drop off, the phænomena themselves become more spiritual and at length cease altogether in our consciousness. The optical phænomena are but a geometry, the lines of which are drawn by light, and the materiality of this light itself has already become matter of doubt. In the appearances of magnetism all trace of matter is lost, and of the phænomena of gravitation, which not a few among the most illustrious Newtonians have declared no otherwise com-



prehensible than as an immediate spiritual influence, there remains nothing but its law, the execution of which on a vast scale is the mechanism of the heavenly motions. The theory of natural philosophy would then be completed, when all nature was demonstrated to be identical in essence with that, which in its highest known power exists in man as intelligence and self-consciousness ; when the heavens and the earth shall declare not only the power of their maker, but the glory and the presence of their God, even as he appeared to the great prophet during the vision of the mount in the skirts of his divinity.

This may suffice to show, that even natural science, which commences with the material phenomenon as the reality and substance of things existing, does yet by the necessity of theorising unconsciously, and as it were instinctively, end in nature as an intelligence ; and by this tendency the science of nature becomes finally natural philosophy, the one of the two poles of fundamental science.

2. OR THE SUBJECTIVE IS TAKEN AS THE FIRST, AND THE PROBLEM THEN IS, HOW THERE SUPERVENES TO IT A COINCIDENT OBJECTIVE.

In the pursuit of these sciences, our success in each, depends on an austere and faithful adherence to its own principles with a careful



separation and exclusion of those, which appertain to the opposite science. As the natural philosopher, who directs his views to the objective, avoids above all things the intermixture of the subjective in his knowledge, as for instance, arbitrary suppositions or rather suffictions, occult qualities, spiritual agents, and the substitution of final for efficient causes ; so on the other hand, the transcendental or intellectual philosopher is equally anxious to preclude all interpolation of the objective into the subjective principles of his science, as for instance the assumption of impresses or configurations in the brain, correspondent to miniature pictures on the retina painted by rays of light from supposed originals, which are not the immediate and real objects of vision, but deductions from it for the purposes of explanation. This purification of the mind is effected by an absolute and scientific scepticism to which the mind voluntary determines itself for the specific purpose of future certainty. Des Cartes who (in his meditations) himself first, at least of the moderns, gave a beautiful example of this voluntary doubt, this self-determined indetermination, happily expresses its utter difference from the scepticism of vanity or irreligion : *Nec tamen in eo scepticos imitabar, qui dubitant tantum ut dubitent, et preter incertitudinem ipsam nihil quærunt. Nam contra*



*totus in eo eram ut aliquid certi reperirem.*

DES CARTES, *de Methodo*. Nor is it less distinct in its motives and final aim, than in its proper objects, which are not as in ordinary scepticism the prejudices of education and circumstance, but those original and innate prejudices which nature herself has planted in all men, and which to all but the philosopher are the first principles of knowledge, and the final test of truth.

Now these essential prejudices are all reducible to the one fundamental presumption, THAT THERE EXIST THINGS WITHOUT US. As this on the one hand originates, neither in grounds or arguments, and yet on the other hand remains proof against all attempts to remove it by grounds or arguments (*naturam furca expellas tamen usque redibit*;) on the one hand lays claim to IMMEDIATE certainty as a position at once indemonstrable and irresistible, and yet on the other hand, inasmuch as it refers to something essentially different from ourselves, nay even in opposition to ourselves, leaves it inconceivable how it could possibly become a part of our immediate consciousness; (in other words how that, which *ex hypothesi* is and continues to be extrinsic and alien to our being, should become a modification of our being) the philosopher therefore compels himself to treat this faith as nothing more than a prejudice, innate indeed and connatural, but still a prejudice.



The other position, which not only claims but necessitates the admission of its immediate certainty, equally for the scientific reason of the philosopher as for the common sense of mankind at large, namely, I AM, cannot so properly be intitled a prejudice. It is groundless indeed ; but then in the very idea it precludes all ground, and separated from the immediate consciousness loses its whole sense and import. It is groundless ; but only because it is itself the ground of all other certainty. Now the apparent contradiction, that the former position, namely, the existence of things without us, which from its nature cannot be immediately certain should be received as blindly and as independently of all grounds as the existence of our own being, the transcendental philosopher can solve only by the supposition, that the former is unconsciously involved in the latter ; that it is not only coherent but identical, and one and the same thing with our own immediate self consciousness. To demonstrate this identity is the office and object of his philosophy.

If it be said, that this is Idealism, let it be remembered that it is only so far idealism, as it is at the same time, and on that very account, the truest and most binding realism. For wherein does the realism of mankind properly consist ? In the assertion that there exists a



something without them, what, or how, or where they know not, which occasions the objects of their perception? Oh no! This is neither connatural or universal. It is what a few have taught and learnt in the schools, and which the many repeat without asking themselves concerning their own meaning. The realism common to all mankind is far elder and lies infinitely deeper than this hypothetical explanation of the origin of our perceptions, an explanation skimmed from the mere surface of mechanical philosophy. It is the table itself, which the man of common sense believes himself to see, not the phantom of a table, from which he may argumentatively deduce the reality of a table, which he does not see. If to destroy the reality of all, that we actually behold, be idealism, what can be more egregiously so, than the system of modern metaphysics, which banishes us to a land of shadows, surrounds us with apparitions, and distinguishes truth from illusion only by the majority of those who dream the same dream? "*I asserted that the world was mad,*" exclaimed poor Lee, "*and the world said, that I was mad, and confound them, they outvoted me.*"

It is to the true and original realism, that I would direct the attention. This believes and requires neither more nor less, than that the object which it beholds or presents to itself, is



the real and very object. In this sense, however much we may strive against it, we are all collectively born idealists, and therefore and only therefore are we at the same time realists. But of this the philosophers of the schools know nothing, or despise the faith as the prejudice of the ignorant vulgar, because they live and move in a crowd of phrases and notions from which human nature has long ago vanished. Oh, ye that reverence yourselves, and walk humbly with the divinity in your own hearts, ye are worthy of a better philosophy! Let the dead bury the dead, but do you preserve your human nature, the depth of which was never yet fathomed by a philosophy made up of notions and mere logical entities.

In the third treatise of my *Logosophia*, announced at the end of this volume, I shall give (deo volente) the demonstrations and constructions of the Dynamic Philosophy scientifically arranged. It is, according to my conviction, no other than the system of Pythagoras and of Plato revived and purified from impure mixtures. *Doctrina per tot manus tradita tandem in VAPPAM desiit.* The science of arithmetic furnishes instances, that a rule may be useful in practical application, and for the particular purpose may be sufficiently authenticated by the result, before it has itself been fully demonstrated. It is enough, if only it be ren-



dered intelligible. This will, I trust, have been effected in the following Theses for those of my readers, who are willing to accompany me through the following Chapter, in which the results will be applied to the deduction of the imagination, and with it the principles of production and of genial criticism in the fine arts.

#### THESIS I.

Truth is correlative to being. Knowledge without a correspondent reality is no knowledge ; if we know, there must be somewhat known by us. To know is in its very essence a verb active.

#### THESIS II.

All truth is either mediate, that is, derived from some other truth or truths ; or immediate and original. The latter is absolute, and its formula A. A. ; the former is of dependent or conditional certainty, and represented in the formula B. A. The certainty, which inheres in A, is attributable to B.

SCHOLIUM. A chain without a staple, from which all the links derived their stability, or a series without a first, has been not inaptly allegorized, as a string of blind men, each holding the skirt of the man before him, reaching far out of sight, but all moving without the least deviation in one strait line. It would be naturally taken for granted, that there was a



guide at the head of the file: what if it were answered, No! Sir, the men are without number, and infinite blindness supplies the place of sight?

Equally *inconceivable* is a cycle of equal truths without a common and central principle, which prescribes to each its proper sphere in the system of science. That the absurdity does not so immediately strike us, that it does not seem equally *unimaginable*, is owing to a surreptitious act of the imagination, which, instinctively and without our noticing the same, not only fills at the intervening spaces, and contemplates the *cycle* (of B. C. D. E. F. &c.) as a continuous *circle* (A.) giving to all collectively the unity of their common orbit; but likewise supplies by a sort of *subintelligitur* the one central power, which renders the movement harmonious and cyclical.

### THESIS III.

We are to seek therefore for some absolute truth capable of communicating to other positions a certainty, which it has not itself borrowed; a truth self-grounded, unconditional and known by its own light. In short, we have to find a somewhat which *is*, simply because it *is*. In order to be such, it must be one which is its own predicate, so far at least that all other nominal predicates must be modes



and repetitions of itself. Its existence too must be such, as to preclude the possibility of requiring a cause or antecedent without an absurdity.

#### THESIS IV.

That there can be but one such principle, may be proved a priori; for were there two or more, each must refer to some other, by which its equality is affirmed; consequently neither would be self-established, as the hypothesis demands. And a posteriori, it will be proved by the principle itself when it is discovered, as involving universal antecedents in its very conception.

SCHOLIUM. If we affirm of a board that it is blue, the predicate (blue) is accidental, and not implied in the subject, board. If we affirm of a circle that it is equi-radial, the predicate indeed is implied in the definition of the subject; but the existence of the subject itself is contingent, and supposes both a cause and a percipient. The same reasoning will apply to the indefinite number of supposed indemonstrable truths exempted from the prophane approach of philosophic investigation by the amiable Beattie, and other less eloquent and not more profound inaugurators of common sense on the throne of philosophy; a fruitless attempt, were it only that it is the two-fold function of philosophy to reconcile reason with common sense, and to elevate common sense into reason.



### THESIS V.

Such a principle cannot be any **THING** or **OBJECT**. Each thing is what it is in consequence of some other thing. An infinite, independent\* *thing*, is no less a contradiction, than an infinite circle or a sideless triangle. Besides a thing is that, which is capable of being an object of which itself is not the sole percipient. But an object is inconceivable without a subject as its antithesis. *Omne perceptum percipientem supponit.*

But neither can the principle be found in a subject as a subject, contra-distinguished from an object: for unicuique percipienti aliquid objicitur perceptum. It is to be found therefore neither in object or subject taken separately, and consequently, as no other third is conceivable, it must be found in that which is neither subject nor object exclusively, but which is the identity of both.

### THESIS VI.

This principle, and so characterised manifests itself in the **SUM** or **I AM**; which I shall hereafter indiscriminately express by the words

\* The impossibility of an absolute thing (*substantia unica*) as neither genus, species, nor individuum: as well as its utter unfitness for the fundamental position of a philosophic system will be demonstrated in the critique on Spinozism in the fifth treatise of my *Logosophia*.



spirit, self, and self-consciousness. In this, and in this alone, object and subject, being and knowing, are identical, each involving and supposing the other. In other words, it is a subject which becomes a subject by the act of constructing itself objectively to itself; but which never is an object except for itself, and only so far as by the very same act it becomes a subject. It may be described therefore as a perpetual self-duplication of one and the same power into object and subject, which presuppose each other, and can exist only as antitheses.

SCHOLIUM. If a man be asked how he *knows* that he is? he can only answer, *sum quia sum*. But if (the absoluteness of this certainty having been admitted) he be again asked, how he, the individual person, came to be, then in relation to the ground of his *existence*, not to the ground of his *knowledge* of that existence, he might reply, *sum quia deus est*, or still more philosophically, *sum quia in deo sum*.

But if we elevate our conception to the absolute self, the great eternal I AM, then the principle of being, and of knowledge, of idea, and of reality; the ground of existence, and the ground of the knowledge of existence, are absolutely identical, *Sum quia sum*;\* I am,

\* It is most worthy of notice, that in the first revelation of himself, not confined to individuals; indeed in the very



because I affirm myself to be ; I affirm myself to be, because I am.

### THESIS VII.

If then I know myself only through myself, it is contradictory to require any other predi-

first revelation of his absolute being, Jehovah at the same time revealed the fundamental truth of all philosophy, which must either commence with the absolute, or have no fixed commencement ; i. e. cease to be philosophy. I cannot but express my regret, that in the equivocal use of the word *that*, for *in that*, or *because*, our admirable version has rendered the passage susceptible of a degraded interpretation in the mind of common readers or hearers, as if it were a mere reproof to an impertinent question, I am what I am, which might be equally affirmed of himself by any existent being.

The Cartesian Cogito, ergo sum is objectionable, because either the Cogito is used extra Gradum, and then it is involved in the sum and is tautological, or it is taken as a particular mode or dignity, and then it is subordinated to the sum as the species to the genus, or rather as a particular modification to the subject modified ; and not pre-ordinated as the arguments seem to require. For Cogito is Sum Cogitans. This is clear by the inevidence of the converse. Cogitat ergo est is true, because it is a mere application of the logical rule : Quicquid in genere est, est et in specie. Est (cogitans) ergo est. It is a cherry tree ; therefore it is a tree. But, est ergo cogitat, is illogical : for quod est in specie, non *necessario* in genere est. It may be true. I hold it to be true, that quicquid vere est, est per veram sui affirmationem ; but it is a derivative, not an immediate truth. Here then we have, by anticipation the distinction between the conditional finite I (which as known in distinct consciousness by occasion of experience is called by Kant's followers the empirical I) and the absolute I AM, and likewise the dependence or rather the inherence of the former in the latter ; in whom "we live, and move, and have our being," as St. Paul divinely asserts, differing widely from the Theists of the mechanic school (as Sir J. Newton, Locke, &c.) who must say from *whom* we *had* our being, and with it life and the powers of life.



cate of self, but that of self-consciousness. Only in the self-consciousness of a spirit is there the required identity of object and of representation ; for herein consists the essence of a spirit, that it is self-representative. If therefore this be the one only immediate truth, in the certainty of which the reality of our collective knowledge is grounded, it must follow that the spirit in all the objects which it views, views only itself. If this could be proved, the immediate reality of all intuitive knowledge would be assured. It has been shown, that a spirit is that, which is its own object, yet not originally an object, but an absolute subject for which all, itself included, may become an object. It must therefore be an ACT ; for every object is, as an *object*, dead, fixed, incapable in itself of any action, and necessarily finite. Again, the spirit (originally the identity of object and subject) must in some sense dissolve this identity, in order to be conscious of it : fit alter et idem. But this implies an act, and it follows therefore that intelligence or self-consciousness is impossible, except by and in a will. The self-conscious spirit therefore is a will ; and freedom must be assumed as a *ground* of philosophy, and can never be deduced from it.



### THESIS VIII.

Whatever in its origin is objective, is likewise as such necessarily finite. Therefore, since the spirit is not originally an object, and as the subject exists in antithesis to an object, the spirit cannot originally be finite. But neither can it be a subject without becoming an object, and as it is originally the identity of both, it can be conceived neither as infinite or finite exclusively, but as the most original union of both. In the existence, in the reconciling, and the recurrence of this contradiction consists the process and mystery of production and life.

### THESIS IX.

This principium commune essendi et cognoscendi, as subsisting in a WILL, or primary ACT of self-duplication, is the mediate or indirect principle of every science; but it is the immediate and direct principle of the ultimate science alone, i. e. of transcendental philosophy alone. For it must be remembered, that all these Theses refer solely to one of the two Polar Sciences, namely, to that which commences with and rigidly confines itself within the subjective, leaving the objective (as far as it is exclusively objective) to natural philosophy, which is its opposite pole. In its very idea therefore as a systematic knowledge of our collective KNOWING, (*scientia scientiæ*) it in-



volves the necessity of some one highest principle of knowing, as at once the source and the accompanying form in all particular acts of intellect and perception. This, it has been shown, can be found only in the act and evolution of self-consciousness. We are not investigating an absolute principium essendi; for then, I admit, many valid objections might be started against our theory; but an absolute principium cognoscendi. The result of both the sciences, or their equatorial point, would be the principle of a total and undivided philosophy, as for prudential reasons, I have chosen to anticipate in the Scholium to Thesis VI. and the note subjoined. In other words, philosophy would pass into religion, and religion become inclusive of philosophy. We begin with the I KNOW MYSELF, in order to end with the absolute I AM. We proceed from the SELF, in order to lose and find all self in God.

#### THESIS X.

The transcendental philosopher does not enquire, what ultimate ground of our knowledge there may lie out of our knowing, but what is the last in our knowing itself, beyond which *we* cannot pass. The principle of our knowing is sought within the sphere of our knowing. It must be something therefore, which can itself be known. It is asserted only,



that the act of self-consciousness is for *us* the source and principle of all *our* possible knowledge. Whether abstracted from us there exists any thing higher and beyond this primary self-knowing, which is for us the form of all our knowing, must be decided by the result.

That the self-consciousness is the fixt point, to which for *us* all is morticed and annexed, needs no further proof. But that the self-consciousness may be the modification of a higher form of being, perhaps of a higher consciousness, and this again of a yet higher, and so on in an infinite regressus; in short, that self-consciousness may be itself something explicable into something, which must lie beyond the possibility of our knowledge, because the whole synthesis of our intelligence is first formed in and through the self-consciousness, does not at all concern us as transcendental philosophers. For to us the self-consciousness is not a kind of *being*, but a kind of *knowing*, and that too the highest and farthest that exists for *us*. It may however be shown, and has in part already been shown in pages 115–116, that even when the Objective is assumed as the first, we yet can never pass beyond the principle of self-consciousness. Should we attempt it, we must be driven back from ground to ground, each of which would cease to be a Ground the moment we pressed on it. We must be whirl'd down



the gulph of an infinite series. But this would make our reason baffle the end and purpose of all reason, namely, unity and system. Or we must break off the series arbitrarily, and affirm an absolute something that is in and of itself at once cause and effect (*causa sui*) subject and object, or rather the absolute identity of both. But as this is inconceivable, except in a self-consciousness, it follows, that even as natural philosophers we must arrive at the same principle from which as transcendental philosophers we set out; that is, in a self-consciousness in which the principium essendi does not stand to the principium cognoscendi in the relation of cause to effect, but both the one and the other are co-inherent and identical. Thus the true system of natural philosophy places the sole reality of things in an ABSOLUTE, which is at once *causa sui et effectus*, πατήρ αυτοπατωρ, ὁ ὢν εαυτός—in the absolute identity of subject and object, which it calls nature, and which in its highest power is nothing else but self-conscious will or intelligence. In this sense the position of Malbranche, that we see all things in God, is a strict philosophical truth; and equally true is the assertion of Hobbes, of Hartley, and of their masters in ancient Greece, that all real knowledge supposes a prior sensation. For sensation itself is but vision nascent, not the cause of intelligence, but intelligence itself re-



vealed as an earlier power in the process of self-construction.

Μάκαρ, ἴλαθί μοι !

Πάτερ, ἴλαθί μοι

Εἰ παρὰ κόσμον,

Εἰ παρὰ μῶραν

Τῶν σῶν ἔθιγον !

Bearing then this in mind, that intelligence is a self-developement, not a quality supervening to a substance, we may abstract from all *degree*, and for the purpose of philosophic construction reduce it to *kind*, under the idea of an indestructible power with two opposite and counteracting forces, which, by a metaphor borrowed from astronomy, we may call the centrifugal and centripetal forces. The intelligence in the one tends to *objectize* itself, and in the other to *know* itself in the object. It will be hereafter my business to construct by a series of intuitions the progressive schemes, that must follow from such a power with such forces, till I arrive at the fulness of the *human* intelligence. For my present purpose, I *assume* such a power as my principle, in order to deduce from it a faculty, the generation, agency, and application of which form the contents of the ensuing chapter.

In a preceding page I have justified the use of technical terms in philosophy, whenever they tend to preclude confusion of thought, and



when they assist the memory by the exclusive singleness of their meaning more than they may, for a short time, bewilder the attention by their strangeness. I trust, that I have not extended this privilege beyond the grounds on which I have claimed it; namely, the convenience of the scholastic phrase to distinguish the kind from all degrees, or rather to express the kind with the abstraction of degree, as for instance multeity instead of multitude; or secondly, for the sake of correspondence in sound in interdependent or antithetical terms, as subject and object; or lastly, to avoid the wearying recurrence of circumlocutions and definitions. Thus I shall venture to use potency, in order to express a specific degree of a power, in imitation of the Algebraists. I have even hazarded the new verb potenziare with its derivatives in order to express the combination or transfer of powers. It is with new or unusual terms, as with privileges in courts of justice or legislature; there can be no legitimate *privilege*, where there already exists a positive law adequate to the purpose; and when there is no law in existence, the privilege is to be justified by its accordancy with the end, or final cause, of all law. Unusual and new coined words are doubtless an evil; but vagueness, confusion, and imperfect conveyance of our thoughts, are a far greater. Every system, which is under



the necessity of using terms not familiarized by the metaphysics in fashion, will be described as written in an unintelligible style, and the author must expect the charge of having substituted learned jargon for clear conception; while, according to the creed of our modern philosophers, nothing is deemed a clear conception, but what is representable by a distinct image. Thus the *conceivable* is reduced within the bounds of the *picturable*. Hinc patet, quâ fiat ut, *cum irrepræsentabile et impossibile* vulgo ejusdem significatûs habeantur, conceptus tam *Continui*, quam *infiniti*, a plurimis rejeciantur, quippe quorum, *secundum leges cognitionis intuitivæ*, repræsentatio est impossibilis. Quamquam autem harum e non paucis scholis explorarum notionum, præsertim prioris, causam hic non gero, maximi tamen momenti erit monuisse: gravissimo illos errore labi, qui tam perversâ argumentandi ratione utuntur. Quicquid enim *repugnat* legibus intellectûs et rationis, utique est impossibile; quod autem, cum rationis puræ sit objectum, legibus cognitionis intuitivæ tantummodo *non subest*, non item. Nam hinc dissensus inter facultatem *sensitivam* et *intellectualem*, (quarem indolem mox exponam) nihil indigitat, nisi, *quas mens ab intellectu accerptas fert ideas abstractas, illas in concreto exequi, et in Intuitus commutare sæpenumero non posse*. Hæc autem reluctantia



*subjectiva* mentitur, ut plurimum, repugnantiam aliquam *objectivam*, et incautos facile fallit, limitibus, quibus *mens humana* circumscribitur, pro iis habitis, quibus *ipsa rerum essentia* continetur.\*—*Kant de Mundi Sensibilis atque Intelligibilis forma et principiis*, 1770.

\* TRANSLATION.

“Hence it is clear, from what cause many reject the notion of the continuous and the infinite. They take, namely, the words irrepresentable and impossible in one and the same meaning; and, according to the forms of sensuous evidence, the notion of the continuous and the infinite is doubtless impossible. I am not now pleading the cause of these laws, which not a few schools have thought proper to explode, especially the former (the law of continuity). But it is of the highest importance to admonish the reader, that those, who adopt so perverted a mode of reasoning, are under a grievous error. Whatever opposes the formal principles of the understanding and the reason is confessedly impossible; but not therefore that, which is therefore not amenable to the forms of *sensuous* evidence, because it is exclusively an object of pure intellect. For this non-coincidence of the sensuous and the intellectual (the nature of which I shall presently lay open) proves nothing more, but that the mind cannot always adequately represent in the concrete, and transform into distinct images, abstract notions derived from the pure intellect. But this contradiction, which is in itself merely subjective (i. e. an incapacity in the nature of man) too often passes for an incongruity or impossibility in the object (i. e. the notions themselves) and seduce the incautious to mistake the limitations of the human faculties for the limits of things, as they really exist.”

I take this occasion to observe, that here and elsewhere Kant uses the terms intuition, and the verb active (*Intueri*, *germanice* Anschauen) for which we have unfortunately no correspondent word, exclusively for that which can be represented in space and time. He therefore consistently and rightly denies the possibility of intellectual intuitions. But as I see no adequate reason for this exclusive sense of the term, I have reverted to its wider signification authorized by our elder theologians and metaphysicians, according to whom the term comprehends all truths known to us without a medium.



Critics, who are most ready to bring this charge of pedantry and unintelligibility, are the most apt to overlook the important fact, that besides the language of words, there is a language of spirits (*sermo interior*) and that the former is only the vehicle of the latter. Consequently their assurance, that they do not understand the philosophic writer, instead of proving any thing against the philosophy, may furnish an equal and (*cæteris paribus*) even a stronger presumption against their own philosophic talent.

Great indeed are the obstacles which an English metaphysician has to encounter. Amongst his most respectable and intelligent judges, there will be many who have devoted their attention exclusively to the concerns and interests of human life, and who bring with them to the perusal of a philosophic system an habitual aversion to all speculations, the utility and application of which are not evident and immediate. To these I would in the first instance merely oppose an authority, which they themselves hold venerable, that of Lord Bacon: *non inutiles scientiæ existimande sunt, quarum in se nullus est usus, si ingenia acuant et ordinant.*

There are others, whose prejudices are still more formidable, inasmuch as they are grounded in their moral feelings and religious principles,



which had been alarmed and shocked by the impious and pernicious tenets defended by Hume, Priestley, and the French fatalists or necessitarians; some of whom had perverted metaphysical reasonings to the denial of the mysteries and indeed of all the peculiar doctrines of christianity; and others even to the subversion of all distinction between right and wrong. I would request such men to consider what an eminent and successful defender of the christian faith has observed, that true metaphysics are nothing else but true divinity, and that in fact the writers, who have given them such just offence, were sophists, who had taken advantage of the general neglect into which the science of logic has unhappily fallen, rather than metaphysicians, a name indeed which those writers were the first to explode as unmeaning. Secondly, I would remind them, that as long as there are men in the world to whom the *Γνώθι σεαυτόν* is an instinct and a command from their own nature, so long will there be metaphysicians and metaphysical speculations; that false metaphysics can be effectually counteracted by true metaphysics alone; and that if the reasoning be clear, solid and pertinent, the truth deduced can never be the less valuable on account of the depth from which it may have been drawn.

A third class profess themselves friendly to me-



taphysics, and believe that they are themselves metaphysicians. They have no objection to system or terminology, provided it be the method and the nomenclature to which they have been familiarized in the writings of Locke, Hume, Hartley, Condiliac, or perhaps Dr. Reid, and Professor Stewart. To objections from this cause, it is a sufficient answer, that one main object of my attempt was to demonstrate the vagueness or insufficiency of the terms used in the metaphysical schools of France and Great Britain since the revolution, and that the errors which I propose to attack cannot subsist, except as they are concealed behind the mask of a plausible and indefinite nomenclature.

But the worst and widest impediment still remains. It is the predominance of a popular philosophy, at once the counterfeit and the mortal enemy of all true and manly metaphysical research. It is that corruption, introduced by certain immethodical aphorising Eclectics, who, dismissing not only all system, but all logical connection, pick and choose whatever is most plausible and showy; who select, whatever words can have some semblance of sense attached to them without the least expenditure of thought, in short whatever may enable men to talk of what they do not understand, with a careful avoidance of every thing that might awaken them to a moment's suspicion of their



ignorance. This alas! is an irremediable disease, for it brings with it, not so much an indisposition to any particular system, but an utter loss of taste and faculty for all system and for all philosophy. Like echos that beget each other amongst the mountains, the praise or blame of such men rolls in volleys long after the report from the original blunderbuss. *Sequitur est potius et coitio quam consensus: et tamen (quod pessimum est) pusillanimitas ista non sine arrogantia et fastidio se offert. Novum Organum.*

I shall now proceed to the nature and genesis of the imagination; but I must first take leave to notice, that after a more accurate perusal of Mr. Wordsworth's remarks on the imagination in his preface to the new edition of his poems, I find that my conclusions are not so consentient with his, as I confess, I had taken for granted. In an article contributed by me to Mr. Southey's *Omniana*, on the soul and its organs of sense, are the following sentences. "These (the human faculties) I would arrange under the different senses and powers; as the eye, the ear, the touch, &c.; the imitative power, voluntary and automatic; the imagination, or shaping and modifying power; the fancy, or the aggregative and associative power; the understanding, or the regulative, substantiating and realizing power; the speculative reason—



vis theoretica et scientifica, or the power by which we produce, or aim to produce unity, necessity, and universality in all our knowledge by means of principles \* *a priori* ; the will, or practical reason ; the faculty of choice (*Germanice*, Willkühr) and (distinct both from the moral will and the choice) the *sensation* of volition, which I have found reason to include under the head of single and double touch." To this, as far as it relates to the subject in question, namely the words (*the aggregative and associative power*) Mr. Wordsworth's "only objection is that the definition is too general. To aggregate and to associate, to evoke and combine, belong as well to the imagination as the fancy." I reply, that if by the power of evoking and combining, Mr. W. means the same as, and no more than, I meant by the aggregative and associative, I continue to deny, that it belongs at all to the imagination ; and I am disposed to conjecture, that he has mis-

\* This phrase, *a priori*, is in common most grossly misunderstood, and an absurdity burthened on it, which it does not deserve ! By knowledge, *a priori*, we do not mean, that we can know any thing previously to experience, which would be a contradiction in terms ; but that having once known it by occasion of experience (i. e. something acting upon us from without) we then know, that it must have pre-existed, or the experience itself would have been impossible. By experience only I know, that I have eyes ; but then my reason convinces me, that I must have had eyes in order to the experience.



taken the co-presence of fancy with imagination for the operation of the latter singly. A man may work with two very different tools at the same moment ; each has its share in the work, but the work effected by each is distinct and different. But it will probably appear in the next Chapter, that deeming it necessary to go back much further than Mr. Wordsworth's subject required or permitted, I have attached a meaning to both fancy and imagination, which he had not in view, at least while he was writing that preface. He will judge. Would to heaven, I might meet with many such readers. I will conclude with the words of Bishop Jeremy Taylor : he to whom all things are one, who draweth all things to one, and seeth all things in one, may enjoy true peace and rest of spirit. (*J. Taylor's VIA PACIS.*)



## CHAPTER XIII.

*On the imagination, or esemplastic power.*

O Adam! one Almighty is, from whom  
 All things proceed, and up to him return  
 If not depraved from good: created all  
 Such to perfection, one first nature all  
 Indued with various forms, various degrees  
 Of substance, and in things that live, of life;  
 But more refin'd, more spiritous and pure,  
 As nearer to him plac'd or nearer tending,  
 Each in their several active spheres assign'd,  
 Till body up to spirit work, in bounds  
 Proportion'd to each kind. So from the root  
 Springs lighter the green stalk: from thence the leaves  
 More airy: last, the bright consummate flower  
 Spirits odorous breathes. Flowers and their fruit,  
 Man's nourishment, by gradual scale sublim'd,  
 To *vital* spirits aspire: to *animal*:  
 To *intellectual*!—give both life and sense,  
 Fancy and understanding: whence the soul  
 REASON receives. And reason is her *being*,  
 Discursive or intuitive.

PAR. LOST, b. v.

“Sane si res corporales nil nisi materiale continerent, verissime dicerentur in fluxu consistere neque habere substan-



tiale quicquam, quemadmodum et Platonici olim recte agnovère.—Hinc igitur, præter purè mathematica et phantasiæ subjecta, collegi quædam metaphysica solâque mente perceptibilia, esse admittenda : et massæ materiali *principium* quoddam superius et, ut sic dicam, *formale* addendum : quandoquidem omnes veritates rerum corporearum ex solis axiomatibus logisticis et geometricis, nempe de magno et parvo, toto et parte, figurâ et situ, colligi non possint ; sed alia de causâ et effectû, *actioneque* et *passione*, accedere debeant, quibus ordinis rerum rationes salventur. Id principium rerum, an ἐτελειαν an vim appellemus, non refert, modò meminerimus, per solam *Virium* notionem intelligibiliter explicari.”

LEIBNITZ: *Op. T. II. P. II. p. 53.—T. III. p. 321.*

Σέβομαι Νοερῶν

Κρυφίαν τάξιν

Χωρεῖ ΤΙ ΜΕΣΟΝ

Οὐ καταχυθίν.

SYNESII, *Hymn III. l. 231.*

DES CARTES, speaking as a naturalist, and in imitation of Archimedes, said, give me matter and motion and I will construct you the universe. We must of course understand him to have meant ; I will render the construction of the universe intelligible. In the same sense the



transcendental philosopher says ; grant me a nature having two contrary forces, the one of which tends to expand infinitely, while the other strives to apprehend or *find* itself in this infinity, and I will cause the world of intelligences with the whole system of their representations to rise up before you. Every other science pre-supposes intelligence as already existing and complete: the philosopher contemplates it in its growth, and as it were represents its history to the mind from its birth to its maturity.

The venerable Sage of Koenigsberg has preceded the march of this master-thought as an effective pioneer in his essay on the introduction of negative quantities into philosophy, published 1763. In this he has shown, that instead of assailing the science of mathematics by metaphysics, as Berkley did in his *Analyst*, or of sophisticating it, as Wolff did, by the vain attempt of deducing the first principles of geometry from supposed deeper grounds of ontology, it behoved the metaphysician rather to examine whether the only province of knowledge, which man has succeeded in erecting into a pure science, might not furnish materials or at least hints for establishing and pacifying the unsettled, warring, and embroiled domain of philosophy. An imitation of the mathematical *method* had indeed been



attempted with no better success than attended the essay of David to wear the armour of Saul. Another use however is possible and of far greater promise, namely, the actual application of the positions which had so wonderfully enlarged the discoveries of geometry, *mutatis mutandis*, to philosophical subjects. Kant having briefly illustrated the utility of such an attempt in the questions of space, motion, and infinitely small quantities, as employed by the mathematician, proceeds to the idea of negative quantities and the transfer of them to metaphysical investigation. Opposites, he well observes, are of two kinds, either logical, i. e. such as are absolutely incompatible ; or real without being contradictory. The former he denominates *Nihil negativum irrepraesentabile*, the connexion of which produces nonsense. A body in motion is something—*Aliquid cogitabile* ; but a body, at one and the same time in motion and not in motion, is nothing, or at most, air articulated into nonsense. But a motory force of a body in one direction, and an equal force of the same body in an opposite direction is not incompatible, and the result, namely rest, is real and representable. For the purposes of mathematical calculus it is indifferent which force we term negative, and which positive, and consequently we appropriate the latter to that, which happens to be the principal object in our



thoughts. Thus if a man's capital be ten and his debts eight, the subtraction will be the same, whether we call the capital negative debt, or the debt negative capital. But in as much as the latter stands practically in reference to the former, we of course represent the sum as  $10-8$ . It is equally clear that two equal forces acting in opposite directions, both being finite and each distinguished from the other by its direction only, must neutralize or reduce each other to inaction. Now the transcendental philosophy demands; first, that two forces should be conceived which counteract each other by their essential nature; not only not in consequence of the accidental direction of each, but as prior to all direction, nay, as the primary forces from which the conditions of all possible directions are derivative and deducible: secondly, that these forces should be assumed to be both alike infinite, both alike indestructible. The problem will then be to discover the result or product of two such forces, as distinguished from the result of those forces which are finite, and derive their difference solely from the circumstance of their direction. When we have formed a scheme or outline of these two different kinds of force, and of their different results by the process of discursive reasoning, it will then remain for us to elevate the Thesis from notional to actual, by contemplating in-



tuitively this one power with its two inherent indestructible yet counteracting forces, and the results or generations to which their inter-penetration gives existence, in the living principle and in the process of our own self-consciousness. By what instrument this is possible the solution itself will discover, at the same time that it will reveal, to and for whom it is possible. *Non omnia possumes omnes.* There is a philosophic, no less than a poetic genius, which is differentiated from the highest perfection of talent, not by degree but by kind.

The counteraction then of the two assumed forces does not depend on their meeting from opposite directions; the power which acts in them is indestructible; it is therefore inexhaustibly re-ebullient; and as something must be the result of these two forces, both alike infinite, and both alike indestructible; and as rest or neutralization cannot be this result; no other conception is possible, but that the product must be a *tertium aliquid*, or finite generation. Consequently this conception is necessary. Now this *tertium aliquid* can be no other than an inter-penetration of the counter-acting powers, partaking of both

\* \* \* \* \*

Thus far had the work been transcribed for the press, when I received the following letter from a friend, whose practical judgement I have



had ample reason to estimate and revere, and whose taste and sensibility preclude all the excuses which my self-love might possibly have prompted me to set up in plea against the decision of advisers of equal good sense, but with less tact and feeling.

“ *Dear C.*

“ *You ask my opinion concerning your Chapter on the Imagination, both as to the impressions it made on myself, and as to those which I think it will make on the PUBLIC, i. e. that part of the public, who from the title of the work and from its forming a sort of introduction to a volume of poems, are likely to constitute the great majority of your readers.*

“ *As to myself, and stating in the first place the effect on my understanding, your opinions and method of argument were not only so new to me, but so directly the reverse of all I had ever been accustomed to consider as truth, that even if I had comprehended your premises sufficiently to have admitted them, and had seen the necessity of your conclusions, I should still have been in that state of mind, which in your note, p. 75, 76, you have so ingeniously evolved, as the antithesis to that in which a man is, when he makes a bull. In your own words, I should have felt as if I had been standing on my head.*

“ *The effect on my feelings, on the other hand,*



*I cannot better represent, than by supposing myself to have known only our light airy modern chapels of ease, and then for the first time to have been placed, and left alone, in one of our largest Gothic cathedrals in a gusty moonlight night of autumn. "Now in glimmer, and now in gloom;" often in palpable darkness not without a chilly sensation of terror; then suddenly emerging into broad yet visionary lights with coloured shadows, of fantastic shapes yet all decked with holy insignia and mystic symbols; and ever and anon coming out full upon pictures and stone-work images of great men, with whose names I was familiar, but which looked upon me with countenances and an expression, the most dissimilar to all I had been in the habit of connecting with those names. Those whom I had been taught to venerate as almost super-human in magnitude of intellect, I found perched in little fret-work niches, as grotesque dwarfs; while the grotesques, in my hitherto belief, stood guarding the high altar with all the characters of Apotheosis. In short, what I had supposed substances were thinned away into shadows, while every where shadows were deepened into substances:*

*If substance may be call'd what shadow seem'd,  
For each seem'd either!*

MILTON.

*"Yet after all, I could not but repeat the lines which you had quoted from a MS. poem of your*



own in the *FRIEND*, and applied to a work of Mr. Wordsworth's though with a few of the words altered :

“ ——— An orphic tale indeed,  
A tale *obscure* of high and passionate thoughts  
To a *strange* music chaunted !”

“ Be assured, however, that I look forward anxiously to your great book on the CONSTRUCTIVE PHILOSOPHY, which you have promised and announced : and that I will do my best to understand it. Only I will not promise to descend into the dark cave of Trophonius with you, there to rub my own eyes, in order to make the sparks and figured flashes, which I am required to see.

“ So much for myself. But as for the PUBLIC, I do not hesitate a moment in advising and urging you to withdraw the Chapter from the present work, and to reserve it for your announced treatises on the Logos or communicative intellect in Man and Deity. First, because imperfectly as I understand the present Chapter, I see clearly that you have done too much, and yet not enough. You have been obliged to omit so many links, from the necessity of compression, that what remains, looks (if I may recur to my former illustration) like the fragments of the winding steps of an old ruined tower. Secondly, a still stronger argument (at least one that I am sure will be more forcible with you) is, that your readers will have both right and reason to complain of you. This Chapter, which cannot, when it is printed,



amount to so little as an hundred pages, will of necessity greatly increase the expense of the work ; and every reader who, like myself, is neither prepared or perhaps calculated for the study of so abstruse a subject so abstrusely treated, will, as I have before hinted, be almost entitled to accuse you of a sort of imposition on him. For who, he might truly observe, could from your title-page, viz. "**My Literary Life and Opinions,**" published too as introductory to a volume of miscellaneous poems, have anticipated, or even conjectured, a long treatise on ideal Realism, which holds the same relation in abstruseness to Plotinus, as Plotinus does to Plato. It will be well, if already you have not too much of metaphysical disquisition in your work, though as the larger part of the disquisition is historical, it will doubtless be both interesting and instructive to many to whose unprepared minds your speculations on the esemplastic power would be utterly unintelligible. Be assured, if you do publish this Chapter in the present work, you will be reminded of *Bishop Berkley's Siris*, announced as an *Essay on Tar-water*, which beginning with *Tar* ends with the *Trinity*, the *omne scibile* forming the interspace. I say in the present work. In that greater work to which you have devoted so many years, and study so intense and various, it will be in its proper place. Your prospectus will have described and announced both its contents and



*their nature ; and if any persons purchase it, who feel no interest in the subjects of which it treats, they will have themselves only to blame.*

*“ I could add to these arguments one derived from pecuniary motives, and particularly from the probable effects on the sale of your present publication ; but they would weigh little with you compared with the preceding. Besides, I have long observed, that arguments drawn from your own personal interests more often act on you as narcotics than as stimulants, and that in money concerns you have some small portion of pig-nature in your moral idiosyncrasy, and like these amiable creatures, must occasionally be pulled backward from the boat in order to make you enter it. All success attend you, for if hard thinking and hard reading are merits, you have deserved it.*

*Your affectionate, &c.”*

In consequence of this very judicious letter, which produced complete conviction on my mind, I shall content myself for the present with stating the main result of the Chapter, which I have reserved for that future publication, a detailed prospectus of which the reader will find at the close of the second volume.

The IMAGINATION then I consider either as primary, or secondary. The primary IMAGINATION I hold to be the living Power and prime Agent of all human Perception, and as a repe-



fiction in the finite mind of the eternal act of creation in the infinite I AM. The secondary I consider as an echo of the former, co-existing with the conscious will, yet still as identical with the primary in the *kind* of its agency, and differing only in *degree*, and in the *mode* of its operation. It dissolves, diffuses, dissipates, in order to re-create; or where this process is rendered impossible, yet still at all events it struggles to idealize and to unify. It is essentially *vital*, even as all objects (*as* objects) are essentially fixed and dead.

FANCY, on the contrary, has no other counters to play with, but fixities and definites. The Fancy is indeed no other than a mode of Memory emancipated from the order of time and space; and blended with, and modified by that empirical phenomenon of the will, which we express by the word CHOICE. But equally with the ordinary memory it must receive all its materials ready made from the law of association.

Whatever more than this, I shall think it fit to declare concerning the powers and privileges of the imagination in the present work, will be found in the critical essay on the uses of the Supernatural in poetry and the principles that regulate its introduction: which the reader will find prefixed to the poem of *The Ancient Mariner*.

END OF VOLUME FIRST.



























Coleridge, Samuel Taylor,

Biographia literaria; or biographical sketches of my literary life and  
opinions

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